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THE JOURNAL

December 24, 1999 • 50 cents (tax included)

Sports St. Mary's boys prepare for league hoop season [C1]

Inside Second air test due on middle school gymnasium [A5]

Jury verdict puts camping ban in question

By James Carter

A homeless man cited for camping on the Albany landfill in violation of a city ordinance was found not guilty last Tuesday after his attorney argued he had no other practical or legal alternative but to sleep there.

Mike Smith, a recluse artist also known as Picasso Mike, was acquitted of the misdemeanor charge Dec. 16 after jurors considered what is known as the defense of necessity.

Judge Ronald Greenberg presided

over the jury trial held in Berkeley/Albany Superior Court last week. The December trial is the first in a series that all involve individuals cited at the Bulb for violating the no-camping ordinance.

The basis of the defense is that an allegedly illegal action can, under special circumstances, be committed because failing to do so would pose a "significant evil" and a greater danger to the accused than violating the law.

"My client had no reasonable, legal alternative than to sleep in the landfill," said David Richie, Smith's attorney.

Richie said Smith attempted to seek shelter at several homeless shelters, including a trailer set up on a temporary basis by the City of Albany. However, the facility — and several others he attempted to enter — were full.

According to Richie, a no-camping ordinance recently adopted by the City of Albany forced residents camping at the Bulb to seek shelter in other municipalities, "though (Albany) had people living there with their tacit approval for years."

When Albany began enforcement of its no-camping ordinance at the landfill

in June, the city offered what was called "transitional resources" to a group of people officials once estimated to number between 50 and 80 individuals.

Yet according to Richie, when a transitional housing unit was established for Bulb residents near the landfill, "the trailer only housed 21 people at max." Richie said the unit did not provide cooking facilities, had a limited supply of old military rations, and provided residents limited access to latrines during the evening.

Individuals who attempted to stay at

the temporary shelter were then referred to shelters and programs out of town, primarily in Berkeley, according to the attorney.

"The dirty little secret is that Albany has no homeless shelters or services though they had people living on the Bulb for years," Richie said.

There may be civil action suit against the City of Albany to challenge the no-camping ordinance, Richie suggested. "The issue comes down to this: If Albany

See BAN, Page A11



STEVE MASLANKA

BRINGING CHRISTMAS to the underprivileged: Engineer Jarl Grunseth and Jose Castrejon of the El Cerrito Fire Department show some of the new toys that have been donated to this year's toy drive for needy children.

Off-street parking rules debated

Exemption brings long-simmering issue to the fore

By James Carter

ALBANY — The City Council voted Monday to uphold a Planning and Zoning Commission ruling that will allow a Neilson Street family to add a bedroom and bath to their home without providing additional off-street parking.

The ruling may have far-reaching implications.

At issue was whether seven-year resident John Sutton could build a 328-square-foot addition to what he described as "our modest house," without having to uproot trees in the back yard and make way for a paved driveway and parking spot there.

Sutton's plans became an agenda item when Councilman Ed McManus filed an appeal to a Planning and Zoning Commission decision granting the building permit. McManus stepped down from the council during the public hearing and debate.

Yet the appeal hearing was overshadowed by

See PARKING, Page A10

New fire chief is no stranger to El Cerrito

Mark Scott is a 25-year veteran of the department and has served as interim chief for the last two years

By Kate Darby Rauch

EL CERRITO — The city has a new fire chief, and he's no stranger to town. Mark Scott, a 25-year veteran of the El Cerrito Fire Department and interim chief for the past year, has been appointed the permanent chief. In the position, he'll also oversee fire operations for unincorporated Kensington, which contracts with El Cerrito.

"The department has a good foundation. We're excited about the opportunity to move forward," Scott said.

The city conducted a nationwide search to fill the spot, and decided the

right man for the job was in its back yard.

"We are always pleased when one of our own employees excels in such a rigorous testing process, because it validates both Chief Scott's experience, skills and abilities and the city's training and development programs," said Gary Pokorny, the city manager.

Scott, 50, started as a firefighter for El Cerrito in 1974. Before that, he was a public safety officer for the city of Sunnyside and a volunteer firefighter in Pinole, where he lives with his wife Cindy and their two children.

He moved steadily up the ranks of the El Cerrito department, serving as a battalion chief since 1989, and interim chief since earlier this year, when Chief Stephen Cutright resigned to take the reins in Emeryville. Another of Scott's duties has been fire marshal in charge of inspection, fire prevention and hazard mitigation.

The main challenge facing the department, Scott said, is the threat of wildland fires. El Cerrito and Kensington bor-

School board may have violated Brown Act

By James Carter

ALBANY — An executive session of the Board of Education held to discuss the process for selecting a school resource officer at Albany High School may have violated the Brown Act, according to an expert in the field.

The board held a closed-door session Dec. 14 to make just such a determination, a meeting that included Police Chief Larry Murdo. Two weeks prior to the executive session, Murdo made it clear he thought the meeting may violate the Brown Act, and stated his misgivings in a letter sent to Superintendent Gary Mills dated Dec. 1.

Murdo reaffirmed his misgivings before the meeting began.

Enacted into law by the State Legislature in 1953, the Brown Act declares that "public commissions, boards and councils and the other public agencies in this state exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly."

"I can only speak for my tenure here, but we have been very careful not to violate the Brown Act," said Superintendent Gary Mills. The newly-appointed district administrator said that based upon research he did on the issue, the

meeting was held well within the legal parameters of the law.

"After the fact of the meeting and because another individual brought it to our attention, we went back to our attorney, Lozano & Smith, and they felt it was legitimate as well."

"I felt like all I was doing was updating the board on an issue that we have previously discussed in the presence of our attorney."

However, a city official who asked not to be named suggested that over the years, the Board of Education may have routinely violated provisions of the law

See BOARD, Page A11

Plaza dry cleaner faces uncertain future

By J.R. Deaton

EL CERRITO — The Great American Dry Cleaners at the Plaza may be required to move its cleaning plant off site, a move the owners say would doom their business.

Shop owners Jungsoon "Jennie" and Jaik "James" Koo have started a petition to allow the cleaning plant to remain in the shop and have prepared a letter to the City Council asking for help.

In her letter to the City Council, Koo says the shop would be willing to install a \$70,000 environmental hazard free

cleaning machine with a working life of 15 years. "After 15 years, we may not ask to keep the dry cleaning machine on the site," Koo added.

The Koo's have owned and operated the Plaza shop for the past 10 years and said a dry cleaning business has occupied the site for more than 30 years.

"Right now we are in the process of working with the San Francisco Water Quality Control Board in terms of remediating the situation and making sure that it's not an environmental health concern," said El Cerrito Plaza Co. Vice Pres-

ident Dorian Bilak at the Dec. 6 City Council meeting. "We're going to work with them to make sure that we don't have an environmental concern."

"The dry cleaner will stay. The issue has to do with the plant," Bilak said. "There is the possibility that we will not be able to have an on-site plant," he added. "A lot of cleaners today don't actually do the dry cleaning on site — it's sent out — and the dry cleaning is dropped off and picked up at that facil-

See CLEANERS, Page A10

WORTH CHECKING OUT

Web site energy bill aid

Homeowners can save hundreds of dollars each year on their energy bills by using the Home Energy Saver Internet site at <http://HomeEnergySaver.lbl.gov>. The site was developed by the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory to help consumers determine how much energy their homes use. Based on questions and answers on the site, recommendations are given on how to make improvements. The site's "making it happen" section provides time-saving links to hundreds of Internet sites with practical, detailed information about energy-efficient homes, products, service providers, utility programs, and online reading materials. The site also provides e-mail access to energy experts who answer questions from users.

Regional parks programs

The East Bay Regional Park District, which recently celebrated its 65th anniversary, has several local events planned for the end of this year and the beginning of 2000. A Boxing Day tea is scheduled for Dec. 26 from 1-3:30 p.m. in the Tilden nature area. Visitors age 8 and older may sample teas from China and India, scones, crumpets, jams and sweets. Participants may bring their tea cups and saucers for show-and-tell. There is a \$5 fee (\$7 for non-residents) and registration is required; call 510-636-1684. The 17th annual New Year's Eve hike will be from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Dec. 31 in the Tilden nature area. Hikers, who will hear about customs and traditions from around the world, are advised to dress warmly. It is OK to bring flashlights. There is no fee. There will be a stroll through Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline from 2:30-4 p.m., Jan. 4. Participants will learn the history of the park and enjoy views of the Bay and San Francisco. There is no fee. The new-moon hike will be from 4:30-7 p.m., Jan. 5, at the Tilden nature area. Since hikers will walk in darkness, flashlights are OK. There is no fee. Details: 562-7275.

Picture Poems

"Picture Poems" by Sharyl Gates is on exhibit through Jan. 15 at Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Ave. Sharyl Gates, artist, poet, and illustrator, will have 3-foot and 4-foot acrylic on canvas "words and painting" and poetic pieces in showcase created published and present, 1985-1999. For more information or to be on mailing list for future



HAUSMUSIK PRESENTS "A Handel Extravaganza: A Sumptuous Banquet of Musical Delights with Secular Songs, Cantatas and Trio Sonatas." Musicians include Jennifer Ellis, soprano (above); Lisa Grodin and Carla Moore, violin; Tanya Tomkins, cello; Hanneke van Proosdij, harpsichord and organ. Performance is on Saturday, Jan. 8, 8 p.m. at St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 1501 Washington St., Albany. Admission: \$17 (general), \$14 (SFEMS, ARS, EMA, students, seniors). Advance reservations recommended. Call 559-4670 for tickets and information. Wheelchair accessible.

exhibits, phone or fax 527-9374, or write to P.O. Box 2082, El Cerrito, CA 94530.

String quartet

The Arlekin String Quartet plays music by Haydn, Shostakovich, Brahms and others, at St. John's Presbyterian Church,

2727 College Ave., Berkeley, on Sunday, Jan. 9, at 3 p.m. The concert is given to help support the musical program offered by the Young People's Chamber Orchestra to Young Bay Area String Musicians. A suggested donation of \$20 for adults and \$5 for students up through age 15, is requested. Refreshments follow. For information, call 510-595-4688.

Christmas mischief precedes holiday party

Twas the night before the Chamber party at the Albany Mechanics Bank when helper Gayle Davis of Sisters (who was to bake little quiches for the party) was surprised by little critters with masks over their eyes. They had opened (unzipped, actually) the thermal carrier containing the quiches and had started to eat them. Being naturally clean little fellows, the first washed them off in Gayle's pond in the back yard.

All in all, five raccoons spent most of the night in Gayle's back yard just washing and eating with delight. The pond is a mess, and Gayle brought

something else to the party.

Brass Horse Gene doll presentation

On Sunday, Jan. 16, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. there will be a regular Gene doll extravaganza at the Albany Senior Center hosted by the Brass Horse. There will be a slide presentation, special free gifts from the Gene team, a raffle of Gene dolls, costumes and accessories and many other totally Gene things.

For travel directions and reservations, please call 526-7522, or e-mail

ALBANY CHAMBER

to thebrasshr@aol.com. Please respond by Jan. 8.

Holiday greetings

The year 2000 will be upon us soon. We at the chamber wish you and yours a happy holiday season and a bountiful and healthy New Year.

EL CERRITO HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

■ Winter break Dec. 20-31.
■ Classes reconvene, Monday, Jan. 3.
■ Modified day, Wednesday, Jan. 5.

■ High School Community Dinner Meeting. Join us to discuss the topic: "Together, what can we do to help our students excel?" Thursday, Jan. 6, 2000, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. John Missionary Baptist Church, 662 South 52nd St., Richmond. RSVP by Monday, Jan. 3, at 525-0234, or call the Rev. Otis Harris at 234-4010. Dinner and child care provided.

■ "It's About Dance." El Cerrito High Dance Program. Friday, Jan. 7, and Saturday, Jan. 8, 8 p.m., at Costa College Theater.

■ PTSA meeting. All parents and students welcome. Refreshments.

LOCAL CLINIC PARTICIPATING IN GLOBAL SCHIZOPHRENIA STUDY

Berkeley, July 28, 1999 - Berkeley Therapy Institute announced today that they have begun enrolling patients into a clinical trial of a compound being evaluated for the treatment of schizophrenia. The study, known as ILP 3004, is one of several in a worldwide development project known as the ReALiZe program.

The study at Berkeley Therapy Institute is part of a clinical development program to evaluate the efficacy and safety of an investigational drug in the treatment of patients with schizoaffective disorder or schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a devastating condition, which affects nearly one percent of the world's population; schizophrenia is the most common and disabling of all major mental illnesses.

Schizophrenia impairs patients' cognitive functions causing positive symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions, and negative symptoms such as blunted affect and social withdrawal. The disease typically strikes in late adolescence, with the onset of gross abnormalities in perception and an inability to feel or express pleasure. The profound incidence of suicide among schizophrenics is a well-documented public health problem.

Dr. Robert Dolgoff, primary investigator for this clinical trial at Berkeley Therapy Institute, notes that "despite impressive advances in psychiatry, we still do not have optimal treatment for schizophrenia. As many as 20% to 30% of patients do not respond to, or get unpleasant side effects with, the medications that are currently available. Therefore, research into new modes of treatment is vital for patients battling this disease."

Patients participating in this ReALiZe study will receive free study medication or placebo and will be closely monitored on a regular basis by mental health professionals. To be eligible for participation in the trial, patients must be between the ages of 18 and 65, diagnosed with schizophrenia and exhibiting symptoms of the disease. In addition, participants must meet all inclusion criteria specified in the study protocol.

To obtain further information about this ReALiZe study, please contact Clinical Trial Coordinator Leigh Pruneau, RN, Ph.D., at (510) 841-8484, ext. 136.

or online at <http://www.collegeboard.org> for the Registration Form, fees, and details on how to register.

On exam days, students may stand by with their money and ID (required).

For details, call Lonnie Johnson, librarian, at 525-0234, ext. 2637, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-3pm

Tune in to KECG 88.1 FM, 9:55-10:05 a.m., Monday-Friday, for ECHS daily announcements. Visit Web site at <http://www.wccusd.k12.ca.us/elcer-3000>

1999-2000 SAT program test calendar

Saturdays, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m., on Jan. 22, April 8, May 6, June 3. See the SAT Registration Bulletin

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EC task force lays out economic development goals

By J.R. Deaton

EL CERRITO—The economic development train remains on track, as the City Council decided to come along on the rails only a little at a time. This week the council and a preliminary report from the Economic Development Task Force man, asked for more details and the city's Economic Development Program for another 90 days. Staff had recommended funding a six-month period, until June 2000. Councilmembers decided the shorter funding period, but currently plan to extend funding for the 90 days is estimated at \$37,500.

The "strategic themes" of the previous report, as presented by task force Chairman Raymond Miles, are attracting new businesses, retaining and expanding existing business" and "making commercial areas more functional and attractive for economic activity."

It also says that the economic development action plan "calls for a proactive economic development strategy that involves promotion of the city, seeking appropriate new businesses consistent with the plan, conceiving and carrying out physical improvements to the commercial areas, working with new businesses to help them solve problems, and identifying and removing regulatory and other barriers to increased economic activity."

The report lists 22 "immediate objectives" in its action plan that include hiring a full-time economic development manager, creating an ongoing economic development commission, launching a campaign "to improve the city's image and attractiveness to business through the use of media and public relations" and preparing a two-year plan.

The report states there is a "strong consensus that the most promising development scenarios in the near term will include attractive, intensive, mixed-use centers of activity."

"Our report assumes a long-term commitment on the part of the council and the city to an economic development program," Miles told the City Council Monday. He said this point, that a long-term commitment is assumed, is "the key point made in our report" and is "one that is very crucial and timely."

"This is going to require a great deal of innovation, marketing, enterprise, entrepreneurship," said Councilman Larry Damon.

"After the amount of effort that

has gone into preparing this report in front of us, I think we have to take a bold step forward," he said, suggesting that the new economic development manager have "equal right and status" with the city manager.

Mayor Mark Friedman confirmed with Miles that a specific program budget will be included in the final Economic Development Task Force report. Referring to earlier council comments, Friedman said "I agree that it is certainly a very key piece that we need for our ongoing decision making as a body."

Each councilmember thanked the task force for its hard work. The City Council eventually voted to fund the program until March 31, 2000. Staff will return to the council with a more specific breakdown of costs and tasks associated with near-term economic development activity. Councilwoman Kathie Perka said she suggested the three-month funding period to "light a little fire" and keep the process moving forward.

IN BRIEF



HARDING SCHOOL friends Sara Abelson, Mackenzie Lawn, Marlene Baker and Natalya Kail enjoyed festivities at the recent Santa pancake breakfast at the El Cerrito Community Center.

State will delay audit of West County schools

By Lisa Shafer

from local school officials and raised concerns at the Department of Education.

West Contra Costa officials say their district's October audit results were unfounded and based on insufficient samples of excused absence documents. The controller focused on those because such absences play a large role in how much money districts receive from the state.

Superintendent Gloria Johnston said Thursday that the district would appeal within days but shared few details about the appeal.

Johnston did, however, criticize auditors for causing disruption at the district in late August as secretaries and principals were opening schools and dragging out the examination for more than two months.

Napa County Superintendent Bar-

bora Nemko had similar gripes, adding that the auditors pressured administrators to turn over documents her office is neither required nor authorized to keep.

The Controller's Office has repeatedly said it conducts the audits professionally and efficiently.

But complaints from numerous district superintendents led state schools' chief Delaine Eastin to meet with Connell on Dec. 6. Eastin suggested that the controller let districts know exactly what would be expected during the audits, said Doug Stone, a Department of Education spokesman.

"There should be complete clarity, so there's no confusion on anyone's part," he said.

The day after Eastin met with Connell, the Controller's Office sent a four-page letter to the 10 districts sched-

uled for the next audits.

"This is to notify you that the State Controller's Office is suspending its audit. We will advise you by letter if and when we elect to proceed," the letter read in part.

The letter offered no explanation for the suspension.

State lawmakers authorized the audits this year after a spike in 1998-99 attendance triggered unanticipated expenses. The Department of Finance has suggested that some districts were padding attendance numbers to receive more money, and that others were making honest mistakes with a new system of attendance tracking.

Tucker said the audits likely would resume in mid-January and that the suspension would not affect West Contra Costa or other districts involved in the first round.

Alameda, Contra Costa will fund needle swaps

By Bonita Brewer

OAKLAND—With state law now on their side, Alameda and Contra Costa counties decided last week to fund needle-exchange programs in an effort to combat the spread of AIDS among intravenous drug users.

Supervisors from both counties formally declared local states of emergency to combat the spread of the AIDS virus and Hepatitis C among injection drug users, and they intend to use the declaration to pay for needle-exchange programs operating quietly with private funds.

The two East Bay counties are among the first in the state to be taking advantage of a new state law, which goes into effect Jan. 1, that decriminalizes needle exchanges if public officials declare AIDS a public health emergency.

Other jurisdictions, including Clara and Sonoma counties, are reportedly considering similar actions. And the cities of San Francisco and Berkeley have long had

such declarations on the books and have been funding needle exchanges while dodging state prosecution.

In Alameda County, Supervisor Scott Haggerty, who said a week ago he needed exchanges to move drug use, supported it Tuesday.

But he told health officials that when they return to the board for funding, the proposal should address how clients are referred to drug rehabilitation.

Alameda County Supervisor Gail Steele said she has received calls from people concerned that county funding of needle exchange would condone an objectionable lifestyle. But "the lifestyle is already there, and the disease is spreading," Steele said.

In Contra Costa County, officials will begin looking at ways to support a needle exchange program that has been quietly operating in Richmond since 1995. Although it has not been legal, police have tolerated the program. The plan calls for the county to collaborate with the Richmond

program and start another in East Contra Costa, either directly or by supporting private efforts.

"It is a public health issue, about saving money and lives and improving the health of all Contra Costa County," said Supervisor John Gioia of Richmond, who made the proposal.

The county will start by providing supplies and staff to Exchange Works, the private clean needle program in Richmond. At first, Contra Costa will shift resources to the program, said Dr. Wendel Brunner, the county public health chief. As it expands into other parts of the county, he said, "we will be back to the board for the costs."

Contra Costa supervisors directed staff to carefully document results of the program. A county report said needle exchange would not encourage drug use, but would steer some users toward treatment. This was disputed by several speakers, however.

As many as 25,000 dirty needles are now exchanged for clean ones each week

in programs in Berkeley and Oakland, run primarily by volunteers using private funds. The city of Berkeley provides \$30,000 annually to the program for needles and other costs.

Alameda County has given about \$250,000 annually to support the Oakland program, but not specifically by providing needles. Instead, it provides such things as AIDS testing, condoms, bleach, cotton balls and AIDS- and drug-prevention literature and education.

But Dr. Arthur Chen, the county's health officer, said he will ask the board in January to increase the funding to \$500,000, to pay for needles and additional staffing. Supervisor Keith Carson said the cost pales when compared with the \$34,000 annual cost to treat a single AIDS patient.

"These are individuals who are already sick and using drugs," he said. "If they could I'm sure they'd take back the life they had. I don't see this as encouraging anything."

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Commission grapples with projected middle school cost increases

On Monday, Dec. 13, the school board met in special session to listen to new information regarding projected costs for construction of the new Richmond Middle School at the Harry Ells Campus. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Citizens' Advisory Commission on School Facilities.

Voters approved funding for the middle school as part of the \$40 million school bond, Measure E, passed in June 1998. Following review and recommendation by staff and the Citizens' Advisory Commission on School Facilities, an architectural firm, DES/WLC, was hired to complete design of the middle school based on a prototype school the company had recently completed in Redlands.

In April, the board approved conceptual plans for the middle school based on estimated costs presented by DES/WLC of \$23.4 million.

In addition to Measure E bond funds, the district plans to apply for state funding for the project and estimates that we will be eligible for approximately \$6 million in state bond funds. In order to apply for state funds, final drawings and plans need to be submitted to the state.

Unfortunately, construction costs have been rising in the Bay Area in particular and throughout California generally.

The April cost estimates were based on a cost per square foot of \$30. However, DES/WLC reported earlier this month, a project they are working on in Redwood City bid at \$170 a square foot.

ALBANY PTA NEWS

By Kay Weinstein

Attention: Scrip buyers

All Albany PTA's have now converted to electronic scrip for Safeway and Andronico's; we will still sell paper scrip for Lucky's Albertsons and Natural Grocery.

E-Scrip is an electronic Scrip program where a supporter (you!) registers any or all of one's MasterCard, Visa, American Express, MasterCard, Debit or grocery loyalty (SafeWay Club) cards for a \$10 annual fee.

Reporters then use their registered cards when paying for merchandise at participating merchants. The merchant then donates a percentage of sale to your PTA. For \$10, you can sign up one school. If you have children in different schools and wish to split the profits between schools, it will cost an additional \$5 per card per year to cover accounting fees.

Better yet, ask a relative or friend to sign up for the other school, and you won't have to split the profits.

To register your cards with e-Scrip, call 800-400-7878 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m.-8 p.m. For more information, check out the Web site at www.escrip.com or call Linda Okamoto at 567-6782.

Following are the Albany school numbers for e-Scrip:

Albany High School 136925439 Albany Middle School 5656344

MacGregor High School 52838791

Marin Elementary School 5651780

Cornell Elementary School 5656069

Ocean View Elementary School 5651432

High School 5651432

SCRIP Orders: Safeway and Andronico's scrip must be purchased from eScrip (see above). We are selling Lucky/Albertsons and Natural Grocery scrip. Call Karen Moss at 526-2018 or Linda Okamoto at 525-6782. Email Linda at cho.prm.lo@cho.org.

■ Jan. 6, PTA meeting, 7 p.m., AHS library

Cornell Elementary School

■ SCRIP sales: Safeway and Andronico's scrip must be purchased from eScrip (see above). We are selling Lucky/Albertsons and Natural Grocery scrip. Call Karen Moss at 526-2018 or Linda Okamoto at 525-6782. Email Linda at cho.prm.lo@cho.org.

■ Jan. 6, PTA meeting, 7 p.m., AHS library

Ocean View Elementary School

■ SCRIP for sale Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings before school, at both early and late bird times, and Wednesday after school. Orders can be placed in office at any time. Safeway and Andronico's scrip must be purchased from eScrip (see above).

■ Reminder: Please remember to save and turn in General Mills boxes for education to office.

■ Jan. 13, PTA meeting, 7 p.m., Marin Multi-Purpose Room

AUSD Board of Education

Jan. 11, regular meeting, 7:30 p.m., Cornell Multi-Purpose Room

AUSD District Calendar

■ Dec. 20-31, Winter Break, no school, Happy Holidays!

■ Jan. 3, 2000, classes start

Items? Call Kay Weinstein at 525-0363 or e-mail: kayweinstein@yahoo.com

GRAND OPENING
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West County School Watch

By Glen Price

structure and format.

First, board and cabinet will be seated together on the floor allowing for closer interaction with each other and the public.

Second, we will reduce the quantity of items on the board agenda, allowing the board to focus on key strategic issues. At the Jan. 5 meeting, the board will hear from staff regarding responses to key personnel and facilities challenges at Kennedy High School.

Can't make it to the meeting? Regularly scheduled board meetings are broadcast live over radio station KECG 88.1 and 97.7 FM beginning at 7 p.m.

Want to receive West County School Watch and other action alerts on local school issues delivered to your email address? Send the message "Subscribe" to pakgen@aol.com. Glen Price is a member of the WC-CUSD school board; the opinions and views expressed in West County School Watch are his own and do not reflect official views or positions of the school board or WC-CUSD unless otherwise noted. Back issues of West County School Watch and other sundry items can be found on the West County School Watch website: <http://www.igc.org/westcounty/>

Results of new middle school gymnasium air test due

Middle school officials await results of second sampling before deciding on reopening the building

By Kate Darby Rauch

ALBANY—Results from a second round of tests for toxins in the flooring of the new Middle School gym are expected next week.

Air tests of the gym were negative in November, but a sample of wood flooring came up positive for methyl bromide, a toxic pesticide and fumigant. The chemical had also been found in the gym air in a single test in October.

"We found methyl bromide in the flooring. It appears to be in the subflooring," Albany schools Superintendent Gary Mills said last week. "It's not in the air at detectable levels.

We're going to continue to air test."

The second flooring test taken late last month was ordered to confirm the presence of the chemical.

The gym has been closed since the initial air test.

Officials say they are not worried about an immediate health threat since recent tests show no methyl bromide in the air.

But they also say they won't know the full scope of the problem until they find out more about the flooring. Both the school district and the contractor say they never sprayed the chemical on the floor.

The district, the state Office of Pesticide Regulation and the Alameda County Department of Agriculture, are closely following the situation.

"The whole thing is a little unusual," said Jim Newey, an assistant agricultural commissioner for Alameda County. "I've been working with complaints about methyl bromide for 20 years and never encountered anything like this. It's all speculative. I'd be more comfortable speculating if I had some confirmed

results."

Built last year, the 700-student campus opened in the fall. Consistent comments about strong chemical odors in the gym, and a few students reporting dizziness and headaches, prompted the district to conduct air tests in October.

One test found an elevated level of methyl bromide, typically used as an agricultural pesticide and fumigant for termites or other wood bugs.

The level was below the standards set by the state Occupational Safety and Health Administration for workplace exposure, but slightly higher than the American Conference of Government Hygienists' recommended level for exposure to children. The district held a meeting to discuss the results with parents.

High-level exposure to methyl bromide is marked by headaches, dizziness and vomiting. The chemical is a suspected carcinogen and neurotoxin, damaging to the brain. It can be used in the United States only under strict guidelines. It's most commonly used as a vapor or gas and dissipates with time.

Kaiser to raise emergency visit fee

The \$35 fee for most patients is in line with other HMOs, is intended to steer members into less costly urgent-care clinics

By Carolyn McMillan

Kaiser Permanente in January will begin charging its members \$35 for emergency room visits, a sevenfold increase from the \$5 co-payment that many members pay.

The change is designed to get patients out of emergency departments and into urgent-care clinics for less serious medical conditions, Kaiser officials said.

But critics charge that the steep increase could keep lower-income patients from getting critical care when they most need it.

"Some people will be deciding between groceries and health care when they're sick and feeling their most vulnerable," said California Nurses Association Executive Director Rose Ann DeMoro.

She said it was particularly bad news that Kaiser elected to raise the co-payment just as the winter flu season gets under way. It's traditionally one of the busiest times of year for hospital ERs.

"People are getting less care and paying more for it," DeMoro said. "They've instituted all these gate-keeping practices that are designed

to frustrate people trying to use the system."

Kaiser officials said employer groups requested the higher emergency room co-payment as a long-term strategy to keep health premiums down.

The \$35 is waived if an ER patient is admitted to a hospital, according to Kaiser.

The HMO decided to make the change earlier this year after conducting an internal study that found increased co-payments would not keep patients from seeking medical treatment in an emergency, said Kaiser Permanente spokeswoman Lila Petersen.

"If members use urgent care instead of the ER (for non-emergencies), that's better for them and it's better for us, because their health costs will be kept down," she said.

The 1996 study analyzed ER use by 30,000 Kaiser members whose benefit packages had a higher co-payment than most Kaiser packages.

It found emergency visits dropped overall by 15 percent, without bringing a decrease in emergency room visits by patients with urgent problems.

Employers have the option of picking up the cost of the new fee, but few have elected to do so, said Christine Paige, Kaiser's vice president of marketing.

She said she was puzzled by the opposition of the California Nurses Association to the new price structure, which she said is in keeping with industry standards.

"We're coming more into alignment with the way employers want to see benefits structured," Paige said. "We changed in response to the market."

Retirees will also pay more for emergency room visits this January, from between \$5-7 per visit to \$20, which is standard within the Medicare market, Paige said.

Kaiser Permanente has roughly 6 million members in California, making it the state's largest HMO.

Premiums rose, on average, between 8 percent and 9 percent this year, depending on the employer.

Most other health plans increased premiums by a similar amount and say they are likely to do so again next year. Prices have been increasing since 1998, after several years of relatively flat costs.

PEOPLE

John A. Charvet

John A. Charvet has joined the United States Army under the Delayed Entry Program at the U.S. Army Recruiting Station, Richmond.

The program gives young men and women the opportunity to delay

entering active duty for up to one year.

The enlistment gives the new soldier the option to learn a new skill, travel and become eligible to receive as much as \$50,000 toward a college education.

After completion of basic military training, soldiers receive advance in-

dividual training in their career specialties.

Charvet, a 1998 graduate of St. Mary's College High School, Berkeley will report to Fort Benning, Columbus, Ga., for basic training Oct. 20.

He is the son of Darlene M. and John F. Charvet of El Cerrito.

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Origins of Christmas traditions revealed

Ah, Christmas! It's so comforting to get together with loved ones and observe those beloved traditions, whether it's decorating the Christmas tree or kissing under the mistletoe. But where did those traditions come from in the first place?

Let's start with the day itself. For the first two centuries after Jesus, nobody knew when his birthday was—or even cared. His death, not his birth, was what was deemed important. The church even declared it a sin to celebrate Christ's birthday "as if He were a King Pharaoh."

That began to change in the third century, as Christianity became more of a mainstream religion. But the date that was chosen for Jesus' birthday wasn't Dec. 25, it was May 20th.

Reason: The Gospel of Luke says that the shepherds who received the announcement of Jesus' birth were guarding their flocks by night. And in those days, shepherds guarded their flocks only in the spring, at lambing time. In winter, the animals were kept in corrals, unwatched.

But why the switch to Dec. 25?

At the time, Christianity's main rival for the hearts and minds of the people was an Eastern religion called Mithraism, which worshipped Mithras, the sun god. Mithras' birthday was Dec. 25 (the Winter Solstice under the Julian calendar in use at the time).

So in a brilliant marketing ploy, the church stole Mithras' thunder by stealing his birthday. Instead of being the birthday of the Sun, Dec. 25 became the birthday of the Son. And the approved form of observing the occasion was a Mass: Christ's Mass—Christmas, for short.

Speaking of dates, there's been a great debate about whether we should celebrate the new millennium in 2000 or 2001, but I have bad news for both sides: They're both wrong. The new millennium actually started four or five years ago.

The foul-up can be traced to an astronomer named Dionysus Exiguus, who lived five centuries after Jesus. Counting backwards, he reckoned that Jesus was born in what we now call the year 1.

But most modern Biblical scholars think Jesus was actually born earlier, and the evidence is pretty convincing: The Gospel of Matthew says Jesus was born "in the days of King Herod," and we know from independent historical records that Herod died in what we would call 4 B.C. So if Matthew is right, Jesus had to have been born about four or five years "before Christ," if you'll pardon the oxymoron.

Over the centuries, other controversies have cropped up around Christmas. The festive aspects of the occasion have always made some people uncomfortable. After the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, one of the first things they

did was outlaw the "pagan mockery" of the observance. In 1659, Massachusetts passed a law making the observance of Christmas a criminal offense.

But by the next century, people were less uptight. George Washington inserted a clause into his employment contract with his gardener which said that he expected the man to remain sober throughout the year, with two exceptions: He was allowed to get drunk for two days during Easter and four days during Christmas.

Next up: Christmas trees. Thank St. Boniface, the man who brought Christianity to Germany in the seventh century. He was preaching a sermon on the nativity to a group of Druids, and he wanted to show them that the oak tree they worshiped wasn't sacred. To prove it, he cut one down. It fell with a mighty crash, crushing every shrub in its path except one—a small fir sapling.

Boniface—no fool he—seized on the happenstance and interpreted the sapling's survival as a miracle.

"Let this be called the tree of the Christ Child," he said. And so it has remained ever since.

German immigrants brought the Christmas tree to America. But it didn't become popular in England until 1840, when Queen Victoria married a German prince named Albert Von Saxe-Coburg Gotha.

That Christmas, Albert installed the first English Christmas tree in Windsor Castle. And the next year, almost every home in England had its own Christmas tree.

By the way, the custom of putting lights on Christmas trees was invented by the Protestant reformer, Martin Luther. He was walking through the woods one evening when he looked up and was awestruck by the blinking of the stars amidst the evergreens. When he got home, he re-created the scene for his family by putting a tree in the main room and wiring some lighted candles to the branches.

As for mistletoe, that comes from St. Bonifaces' old nemesis, the Druids. It was the sacred plant of Frigga, their goddess of love, which is where all that kissing business started.

Not surprisingly, the early church took a dim view of this. In the fourth century it forbade the use of mistletoe in any form, suggesting people substitute holly, instead. The pointed leaves of the holly bush looked like Christ's crown of thorns, and the red berries symbolized drops of his blood—which is how holly became a Yuletide tradition.

The ban on mistletoe continued into the Middle Ages. Even as late as the 20th century, some churches in England and America forbade wearing mistletoe sprigs or corsets during services.

As for poinsettias, we know exactly when they became a nativity tradition: 1828, when Dr. Joel Poinsett, the first American ambassador to Mexico, brought the flaming red plant to the states.

Christmas cards: It's long been a custom for people to write each other letters at Christmas time, but the sending of commercially printed cards didn't start until 1843.

That's when the first Christmas card went on sale in England. Designed by the well-known illustrator John Calcott Horsley, it depicted a good deed—feeding the hungry.

It promptly provoked a storm of criticism from the British temperance movement, which objected to the fact that the poor people in the picture were not only being fed, but also given a bit of Christmas cheer to drink.

But the public loved them. They snapped them up as fast as Horsley could print them. The rage spread all over Europe. But they didn't become popular in this country until 1875, when a Boston lithographer named Louis Prang (aka "the father of the American Christmas card"), an immigrant from Germany, started printing them.

Santa Claus: Yes, Virginia, there really was a St. Nicholas. He was bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor, in the fourth century. He was known

for two things: his generosity, and his love of children. In fact, the church declared him the patron saint of children.

Santa didn't have a weight problem in the early days. He was depicted as a tall, slender man in red-and-white bishop's robes (the origin of today's Santa suit), wearing a bishop's mitre on his head and carrying a 6-foot crozier.

Instead of reindeer, he was

hauling around by a donkey. And instead of Gameboys and Beanie Babies, he left the children fruit, nuts, hard candies and wood figurines.

During the Protestant Reformation, anything that had to do with the Catholic Church, including saints, became a no-no. So St. Nicholas was banished from most Protestant European countries. Only in Holland did he continue to flourish.

Dutch children placed their wooden shoes by the hearth on Christmas Eve. The shoes were filled with straw for St. Nicholas' donkey to eat. In return, Nicholas would leave a treat in each shoe—the origin of our Christmas stockings. The Dutch called St. Nicholas Sint Niklaas, which became Sinterklaas—the name he had when the Dutch sailed to America and founded New Amsterdam.

In the 17th century, the Dutch lost New Amsterdam to the English, who renamed it New York. And Sinterklaas became Sinterklaas.

St. Nicholas' name was eventually Anglicized to Santa Claus.

The rest of the Santa legend is due to Clement Clarke Moore and Thomas Nast.

Moore was a theologian who composed "The Night Before Christmas" in 1822 as a poem to be read to his children. He was the one who invented the reindeer (all except Rudolph), the belly that shook like "a bowl full of jelly," and all the rest.

Curiously, Moore didn't admit to being the author for more than 10 years. He thought writing a child's poem might damage his professional reputation. By the time he came out, of course, every child in the country could recite it by heart.

Thomas Nast was the one who gave Santa his look. Nast was the greatest cartoonist of the 19th century. It was he who invented the Republican elephant and the Democratic donkey. In 1863, at the height of the Civil War, he drew a cartoon of Santa that transformed the slender bishop of Myra into the roly-poly Santa we know today.

As for Rudolph, he began life as "Rollo, the Red-Nosed Reindeer." Then they tried "Reginald, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" before they finally settled on Rudolph.

Rudolph (or whoever) was invented in 1939 by Robert May, an advertising copywriter at Montog-



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that we stop celebrating

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fact it was a relief. His
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particularly happy ones, and
children's response sup-

"That's a good idea,"
said. "It's not really like
anyway. We have Ham-

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were. Now we enjoy Christ-
onlookers and even have
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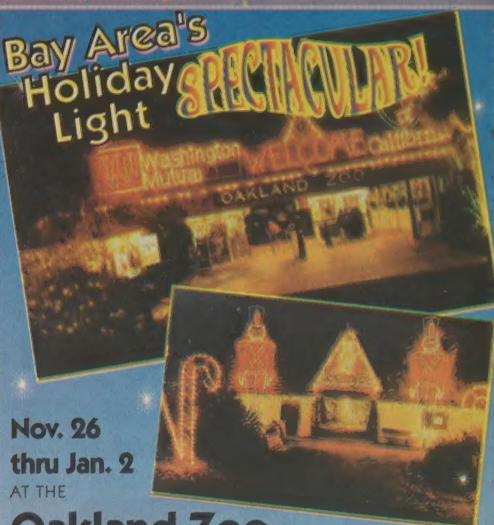
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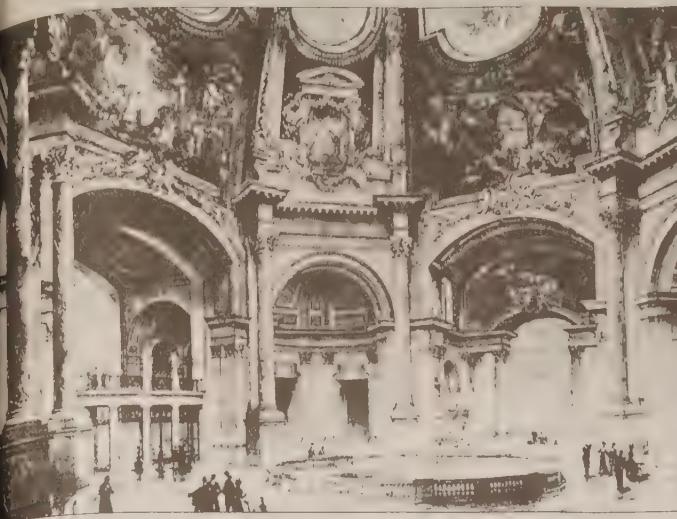
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Looking at the grandeur of the UC campus that never was



Benard's proposed design for the lobby of the Hearst Gymnasium.

personality clashes 30 years ago kept Emile Benard's and design for UC Berkeley from being realized

By J.R. Deaton

BERKELEY — By the late 1890s, University of California's destiny manifest. A grand campus was to complement and demonstrate New World greatness. An competition in Antwerp, Belgium in 1898, and a final competition in San Francisco following year, produced a winning master plan that would have formed the Berkeley campus as a Victorian masonry-and-wood version of the West and marble and Roman of the Pacific.

Benard's winning Franco- designs never quite made it planning board to reality. Architect John Galen Howard, however, used Benard's plans, modified in his vision, and designed the fully Mediterranean buildings that form today's central new exhibit and lecture series at University of California Berkeley museum outlines how the campus transformed from a bucolic setting into the grand granite-campus of the Pacific.

San-Pacific, The Phoebe Hearst International Architectural Competi-

tion and the Berkeley Campus, 1896-1930," is a fascinating exhibit about the story behind the story of the modern Berkeley campus.

"Roma-Pacific, The Phoebe Hearst International Architectural Competition and the Berkeley Campus, 1896-1930," will be at the Berkeley Art Museum Pacific Film Archive, 2626 Bancroft Way, through April 23, 2000, Sunday, Feb. 6, at 3 p.m., Robert Judson Clark, professor emeritus of art and archaeology, Princeton University, will give his lecture "Athens of the West and Rome of the Pacific: The Phoebe Hearst Architectural Competition and its Phenomena." Call the museum at (510) 642-0808 for details and more information about the ex-

In the late 1890s, UC Regent Jacob Reinstein, architect Bernard Maybeck, architect Phoebe Hearst and others, realized the university needed a long-range master plan for this "city of learning" said Robert Judson Clark, guest curator for the exhibit. Clark, professor emeritus of art and archaeology at Princeton University, was an undergraduate at Berkeley in late 1950s and last week gave a tour of his Berkeley exhibit.

By the 1870s, this city of learning was being called the "Athens of the West or Athens of the Pacific," Clark said. Benard, however, labeled the large depictions of his proposed campus "Roma" after the great Italian city, not after Paris or Athens.

In late 1901, John Galen Howard, who had won the fourth prize in the campus design competition, was chosen to be supervising architect of the

"complex of Franco-Roman style buildings along a major east-west axis open squares," czars and kings would have felt at ease here.

The gymnasium perspective shows a decorated and painted rotunda ceiling supported by marble pillars. Statuary and Corinthian capitals, frescos, bas-relief and polished stone are everywhere. "It was a glorious extravagance and the cause of much publicity, good and unfavorable" Clark says of Benard's design.

When the competition for a grand campus was being discussed, Clark said, it was clear the UC campus was supposed to be part of a "greater San Francisco" that would extend beyond the city's narrow peninsular site. The campus was to be part of a great imperial metropolis that would dominate what is now called the Pacific Rim. "This campus will be the place where scholars will gather, collections will be brought together, for the conquering or the education of the people of the Pacific and the Americas," is how Clark describes the thinking of that time.

Benard's follow-up designs and a December 1899 to January 1900 visit to California were less than successful. Benard was annoyed at not being immediately commissioned to proceed with all the buildings and was rude and disdainful with university principals. Benard insulted the competition's trustees, including benefactor Phoebe Hearst, and demanded an additional 30,000 francs before making any changes in his original designs.

In late 1901, John Galen Howard, who had won the fourth prize in the campus design competition, was chosen to be supervising architect of the

university. He was instructed to use Benard's master plan as much as possible, but the campus plan was modified and it soon became Howard's vision.

Benard's influence and name faded from the scene.

The President's House, on the north side of campus, is the only building that appears in Benard's later plan that is carried out on site.

From 1901 to 1924, working with University President Benjamin Ide Wheeler, Howard designed more than

20 campus buildings and landmarks including the Hearst Mining Building, the Greek Theater, California Hall, Doe Library, Sather Gate, Sather Tower (the Campanile) and Wheeler Hall. The university's main library, Doe Library, completed in two stages, is considered to be Howard's masterpiece, Clark said.

Under Howard's direction the campus evolved from the Victorian Athens of the West to a more Italianate setting," Clark said in his description of the exhibit.

"It reflected the popular dream of realizing a new Mediterranean world in California, inspired by the weather, the scenery and the need to combine local pride with national presumption."

Luckily for us, people late in the last century and early in this one had such presumption.

A walk around the buildings of the central campus reveals the solid granite-faced result of Roma-Pacific California dreaming — tempered by what Clark describes as John Galen Howard's "practical invention."

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LIGHTS and tigers and... my! And lions, too. The (above) is bedecked with 90,000 Christmas lights in annual ZooLights tour, which continues through Sunday. The tour features illuminated creations, from grazing pink flamingos. See Matthew Epps (far left) on carnival ride at the Oakland girl (left) appears around zoo entertainment, and Nicholas Frederick (bottom) on the ZooLight festival's train which runs through

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December 24, 1999

Section B

Dian Hymer Get a handle on which inspections seller ought to order [B3]

Weekly Sales Follow the numbers that shape our market [B8]

Classified Buy it, sell it, trade it inside [B9]



HOMESTYLES/ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE TROUBLE WITH A BORING FAMILY ROOM with a fantastic view is that when it gets dark, you are left with a boring family room. This room creates its own fantastic view, day or night. The combination of built-in bookshelves flanking the big-screen television and direct-vent gas fireplace offers plenty of eye appeal. Above the built-ins are art niches that complete the view. Can lights built into the niches illuminate art, pottery or flowers. Media walls like this have become a must for family rooms in new homes nationwide and have also become popular remodeling projects. Designing a place for a television in a family room seems logical now, but it is a reflectively recent phenomenon.

Oakland public spaces thrive

Bay Area residents enjoy 'jewels' of history

Part three of four parts

Oakland's public parks and recreation facilities have their formal origins in the early 1900s. Organizers held the first meeting of the Oakland Playground Association and the first meeting of the Parks Commission in 1909. None of the major city parks yet existed, and most of the land that was to become part of the city's parks system was still under private ownership.

In 1912, Mosswood Park, the first of Oakland's "social centers," opened to the public. Mosswood Park is a four-block square facility located at the corner of Broadway and MacArthur Boulevard. It is part of what was once a much larger estate known as Mosswood, which had been established by a Mr. Moss, who emigrated from New England in the 1860s.

After Moss's death, most of his lands and the family house were deeded to the city. Oakland's then-Mayor, Frank E. Mott, a progressive, decided to create a city park out of the Moss family's generous bequest.

See WILSON, Page B8

Downing a Place of History



By Mark Wilson

The past comes to life in visions of community realized in deed

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Get a handle on the inspections a seller ought to order

Real Estate Forum



By
Dian Hymer

Lots can go wrong. Get it checked out in advance, or pay the price later.

report. But, this leaves the deal open-ended. If the inspection reveals more damage than the sellers anticipated, the deal might require renegotiation.

Sellers increasingly order pre-sale home inspections, in addition to a termite inspection, before they market their homes to the public. A home inspection is more comprehensive than a termite inspection. Home inspectors examine the major systems of a home, such as plumbing, heating, and electrical, as well as the roof and the foundation.

An offer to buy a home typically includes an inspection contingency. This usually means that the buyers' offer is conditioned on satisfactory inspections of the property. The purpose of ordering a pre-sale home inspection is not to avoid an inspection contingency. Buyers should be

encouraged to complete whatever inspections they deem necessary.

A pre-sale home inspection report provides buyers with more detailed information about a property than they would otherwise have. The benefit to the sellers of having such a report, in addition to helping satisfy disclosure obligations, is that it increases the odds of negotiating a solid deal with the buyers.

Another benefit of having pre-sale reports is that buyers can make well-educated "as is" offers if they want to buy the property in its present condition. Let's say the sellers are planning to pay for \$10,000 of termite work. The buyers could pay \$10,000 less for the property if they buy it "as is" regarding the termite work. This relieves the sellers of having to get the work done, although

it might require approval by the buyers' lender.

Some sellers make repairs based on pre-sale inspection reports before putting their home on the market. This can result in a quicker sale and a higher selling price. If you don't have the time or money to repair defects, consider getting bids from licensed contractors for items that are likely to be of concern to most buyers. This will give buyers a realistic idea of what it will cost to correct defects.

Ask your listing agent to prepare a package that includes the inspection reports, contractors' bids and invoices for defects you've had repaired. This package should be made available to prospective buyers who should be encouraged to review the reports before making offers.

way, if there's anything in the reports that the buyers find objectionable, it can be taken into account before an offer is made. This should minimize the need to renegotiate the sale price during the transaction which often occurs when inspection reports aren't available before buyers make offers.

Be sure to use local inspectors and contractors who are well-known and respected in the community.

Dian Hymer is a top-producing broker associate with Coldwell Banker in the Montclair/Piedmont office and author of "Starting Out, The Complete Home Buyer's Guide." Available in book stores or from Chronicle Books: (800) 722-6657.

Twenty years ago, sellers seldom ordered inspection reports when they listed their homes for sale. Home prices were much lower, and buyers were less concerned about property condition. Disclosure obligations were usually non-existent. Now home prices are considerably higher and a growing number of states have laws requiring homeowners to disclose property defects when they sell. Today, home sellers often order a home inspection when they list their home for sale. A termite inspection should cover damage caused by all wood-destroying organisms like dry rot and fungus, not termites.

In many areas, it's customary for buyers to pay for termite damage when a home is sold. Sellers who

Unless you live in Hawaii, homeowners' investments look rosy

Nation's Housing



By
Kenneth R.
Harney

"In scattered areas, the jumps are astounding..."

For a more accurate impression of housing appreciation, take a look at the year-to-year performance in major markets nationwide. The data all comes from the only federal agency that tracks house value changes — the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight. The agency uses a "repeat-sale" methodology that tracks a sample of nearly 12 million properties with multiple sale or refinancing transactions.

Only Hawaii's down

Measured over the past 12 months, the typical American house has appreciated 6 percent. The District of Columbia (up 13 percent), Massachusetts (up 11.7 percent), Minnesota and New Hampshire (both up 10 percent) were overperformers all year long, not just the third quarter. Following them are Colorado (up 9.6 percent for the year), Michigan (up 8 percent), New York (up 7.7 percent), Georgia (up 7 percent), California (up 7 percent), South Carolina (up 6.7 percent), Wisconsin (up 6.6 percent), New Jersey (up 6.4 percent) and Texas and Connecticut (both up 6 percent).

Slightly below the 6 percent national average — but still racking

up appreciation at least twice the rate of overall inflation — were houses in Nebraska (up 5.8 percent), Arizona (5.5 percent), Vermont (5.3 percent) and Washington (5.2 percent).

Only one state — economically strongest Hawaii — saw its house values decline (minus 4.6 percent for the year, minus 3.5 percent for the last quarter). New Mexico (up 2.4 percent for the year), Alaska and Nevada (up 2 percent), and Utah (1.8 percent) lagged behind the national CPI rate during the past 12 months.

For homeowners and new buyers who prefer a longer perspective on property investment returns,

here are the top housing-value markets for the last five years: Leading the pack are two states that have rebounded dramatically — Michigan (42.7 percent average appreciation) and Colorado (up 38.6 percent) in the '90s after challenging years in the '80s.

Next comes Utah, which, although the appreciation rate has cooled in the past year, has racked up a strong 36.5 percent over the past five years.

Tied for fourth place are Minnesota and Massachusetts (both with 34.8 percent gains). Next comes Oregon (up 34.3 percent), Georgia (up 31.8 percent), New Hampshire (30 percent), Arizona

(up 29 percent), South Carolina (28.5 percent), and Nebraska and Kansas (28 percent).

What's ahead?

During the past 60 months, the only state where the typical homeowner has experienced a net loss in property value is Hawaii, where houses have declined an average 15 percent. The rest of the country is firmly in positive territory — the national average gain has been 24 percent — during the past five years.

Looking ahead to the next few years, it is possible to identify emerging high-gain markets? Probably the best statistical pre-

diction of near-future winners are markets that have underperformed the national index for years, but have heated up for local economic reasons during the past 12 to 24 months. Some good bets for that list: Look to the East District of Columbia, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut — along with Texas.

Kenneth R. Harney is a syndicated columnist who is president of the Harney Corp., a publishing and consulting firm based in Chevy Chase, Md. Write to him c/o the Washington Post Writers Group, 1150 15th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20071.

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Prevention can help avoid emergencies

On the House



By Morris and James Carey

CORRODED washing machine hose, flickering lights and the faint odor of natural gas can be sure signs of impending disaster.

Corroded washing machine hose can be the cause of a flooded washing machine. Lights that flicker are a signal that there is a problem with the electrical system. Potential causes of a power problem could range from a loose connection to an over-loaded circuit. Both can cause a power outage to level a house. If you smell natural gas in the air, there likely is a leak at a fitting that connects the individual pieces of gas together or the gas line to an appliance. In either case, errant natural gas is a bomb waiting to go off.

With preventive maintenance, the first and most important thing is being prepared for an emergency. Knowing where and how to turn off the water, gas and power to your home. All adults and teenagers in a family should have this information.

Water main There are usually a couple of locations where the water supply to your home can be turned off. The first is the water main. This is a valve with an analog or digital gauge that is used to measure the amount of water you consume. A water meter can be visible anywhere surrounding your home. It is generally below grade in a concrete or plastic box with a concrete or plastic lid. The box is in the sidewalk. The lid can be opened by using a screwdriver or pry bar. In most cases, the lid is regularly opened and closed by the utility company to read the meter; thus it should be open in case of an emergency. However, the box is rarely open, so do so periodically to avoid getting stuck in an emergency. The easiest means of turning off water at the water main is with a wrench or pry bar. In most cases, the wrench is made of metal and stands about 30 inches high. Other wrenches can be used, but may require more strength than people have.

Shutting off gas

Gas can be shut off in more than one location. To turn off all of the gas supplied to your home, do it at the meter. Although the gas main can be virtually anywhere on your property, it typically is found at an exterior wall close to the street. The gas meter is used to join incoming gas from the utility company to the gas pipes that run to your various gas appliances. The meter is also used to measure the amount of gas you consume.

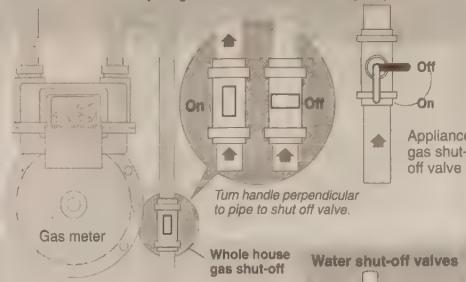
There is a gas whole-house shut-off valve on the pipe at the utility side of the meter. To turn the gas off to the entire house, turn the lug on the valve perpendicular to the pipe. An adjustable or open-end wrench can be used to operate the valve. We suggest attaching a wrench to the gas meter with a short length of chain. This will prevent the need to

Emergencies

Quick action is the key to resolving household emergencies.

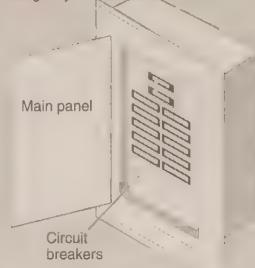
Gas leaks

Learn how to shut off your gas supply before an emergency.



Electricity shut-off

Know how to shut off all electricity to your home in case of a gas leak or other emergency.



search for a wrench in the event of an emergency. Gas lines are still filled with gas even after the valve has been closed, so lines should be bled before attempting any work.

If you suspect there is a gas leak at an appliance or the gas to an individual appliance needs to be turned off, close the appliance gas shut-off valve at each appliance. As with the valve at the gas meter, an appliance gas shut-off valve can be turned off by rotating it 90 degrees or a right angle to the gas line.

Caution: If you suspect a gas leak, immediately turn off the gas to the house and call the utility company emergency service department.

Electrical power is supplied to a home via wires that are connected to a main service panel. The panel can contain either fuses or breakers, depending upon the age of the home and/or the panel. Often, if the main service contains only one

breaker — the main breaker — there are one or more secondary or subpanels that contain breakers or fuses that control power sent to various circuits throughout your home.

Use the fuse or main breaker in the main service to shut off power to your entire house. Pulling the fuse or tripping the breaker does this. If you wish only to turn the power off to a branch circuit (as when making a repair), trip the breaker or remove the fuse for that individual circuit.

Loose electrical wires can level a home. If you suspect a problem with your electrical system, call the service department of your local utility company or a qualified electrician to make an inspection.

Write the Carey Brothers, c/o the Associated Press, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020-1666, or e-mail them at careybro@onthehouse.com.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fireplace adds more than just warmth to living space

Cut Your Utility Bill

By James Dulley

sound level, too.

Q: We spend more time indoors now, and we would like to add a wood-burning fireplace. We want one that is attractive, easy to install and produces real heat for our house. What designs do you recommend?

A: Many of the new super-efficient wood-burning fireplaces are truly beautiful. I use an attractive heat-circulating fireplace in my family room that heats most of my house. I also have a small pellet stove in my study/office, so my heat pump rarely has to come on in the winter.

Decorative surrounds and mantels, made of natural wood, stone, etc., are available to fit each model, or you can build your own. Some models offer 24-karat gold-plated or real brass doors and trim pieces. If you already have a fireplace, place a decorative insert that slides inside it.

A peninsula model (three glass sides) is one of the most unusual designs, and will become the focal point of your room. It produces radiant heat in three directions, and your family will surely gather around it often.

For warmth in two rooms, select a see-through design that mounts in an interior wall. If space is limited, a corner (two adjacent glass sides) or a bay model that extends just a little into your room are options.

For producing heat, a heat-circulating fireplace design would be your best choice. These fireplaces look similar to ordinary fireplaces, but some produce up to 80,000 Btu per hour of heat. For clean fresh room air, some models (Heat-N-Glo) have built-in air cleaner modules.

If you are just an average do-it-yourselfer, a zero-clearance fireplace design is a good choice. The unit is insulated and has multiple walls, allowing it to be mounted in standard wood framing for simplicity. If you are handy with tools, consider a masonry model.

Heat-circulating wood-burning fireplace designs incorporate natural air circulation to distribute heat. For more heat, optional blower kits are available that are easy to install. Some are held in place with magnets. Variable-speed blowers allow you to control the

Write for Update Bulletin No. 791, a buyer's guide of 11 high-efficiency fireplaces, styles, sizes, features, a firewood selector guide and wood heating evaluation worksheet.

Q: While I was at my home-center store yesterday, I saw some inexpensive faucet aerators that screw on the end of the faucet. How do they save water if I am filling a pot or the sink?

A: Aerators save water by mixing air with the water for a forceful flow using less water. If you are filling a container with water, however, it just takes longer and saves no water.

The savings are realized when you are washing your hands, dishes, etc. For these activities, the length of time that the water is on will be the same with or without the aerator. With the aerator, 50 percent less water is used.

To receive Utility Updates, send \$3 (checks payable to Dulley) and a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope to James Dulley, 6906 Royalgreen Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45244. For instant download, see his Web site at www.dulley.com.

Home for the Holidays

GRUBBCo. com



Holiday Wishes

From Your Local Realtors and Affiliates

In appreciation of our association during the past year, we extend our best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season to everyone.



MARIA SINCLAIR
Happy Holidays to all my clients and friends. You are The Best!
MONTCLAIR BETTER HOMES
(510) 339-4000



WENDY GARDNER
Best wishes for a healthy and happy New Year
PACIFIC UNION
1900 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-6400 x 303



YEHUDA BEN-DAVID
Wishing you all the joys of the season!
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
2077 Mountain Blvd., Montclair
(510) 339-8888



JOE & DEE KNOWLAND
A season of joy and love is our wish for you!
PACIFIC UNION
1900 Mountain Blvd.
(510) 339-6460 x 318



SANDRA VOGL
My warm wishes for happy holidays and a cheer-filled New Year!
THE GRUBB CO
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 216



LINDA MCCLAIN
Wishing you the joy of the season!
THE GRUBB CO.
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 226



MINDY SCOTT
Wishing you a warm and wonderful holiday!
THE GRUBB CO.
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 215



SHARON & STAN HAMMOND
Wishing you Happy Holidays and an Exciting Year 2000!
WELLS & BENNETT
1451 Leimert Blvd., Oakland
(510) 531-7000



CLAIRE CUNNINGHAM
May peace and joy be with you in the coming year! Happy Holidays!
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
342 Highland Avenue, Piedmont
(510) 644-5434



JULIE NACHTWEY
Let me help you as your "Fine Home Specialist"
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
2 Tunnel Road, Berkeley
(510) 849-5303



JUDY CAIN
Happy Holidays and a Special Thank You to my Friends!
THE GRUBB CO.
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 209



MARIEDDA GRYNBALL & BOB RANDALL
Best wishes for the New Year!
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
2077 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-9290



GEORGIA RICHARDSON
May love, peace, health and joy be yours this Holiday Season!
RICHARDSON
REAL ESTATE SERVICES
4400 Keller Ave., Suite 240
(510) 569-3499 or (510) 433-9996



JACKIE CARTER
Wishing you all the joys of the season!
RICHARDSON
REAL ESTATE SERVICES
3500 Calandria Avenue
(510) 632-2539



KURT MEYER
Best wishes to all, and to all a great Y2K!
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
2077 Mountain Blvd., Montclair
(510) 869-4254



DOLORES THOM
May the joy of the Holiday Season fill your hearts and home.
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
3320 Grand Ave., Oakland
(510) 835-6080



CAROLINE PETERS
Wishing all my friends an incredible year 2000 and a home full of happiness!
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
342 Highland Avenue, Piedmont
(510) 644-5441



CHUCK CORWIN
May love and peace fill your heart and home. Happy Holidays!
PACIFIC UNION
1900 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-6460 x 353



RUBY NG, CRS/ KAREN LUM
Season's greetings & many thanks to our clients & friends
COLDWELL BANKER
6137 La Salle Ave.
(510) 339-4779



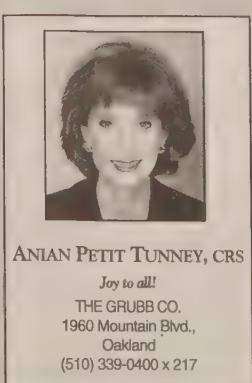
PATSY BUHLER
Wishing you the Happiest of Holidays and a successful New Year!
WELLS & BENNETT
1451 Leimert Blvd., Oakland
(510) 531-7000



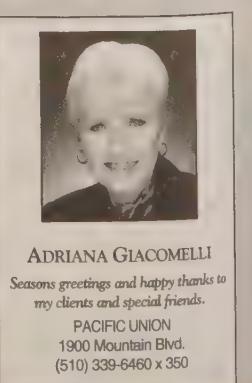
TRICIA SWIFT
Merry Christmas and Happy New Century!
TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Avenue, Berkeley
(510) 852-2133



ANNE VAN DYKE
Health and Peace!
TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Avenue,
Berkeley
(510) 852-2133



ANIAN PETIT TUNNEY, CRS
Joy to all!
THE GRUBB CO.
1960 Mountain Blvd.,
Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 217



ADRIANA GIACOMELLI
Seasons greetings and happy thanks to my clients and special friends.
PACIFIC UNION
1900 Mountain Blvd.
(510) 339-6460 x 350

Holiday Wishes

From Your Local Realtors and Affiliates

In appreciation of our association during the past year, we extend
our best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season to everyone.



RON KRISS

May the coming year be happy and prosperous. Happy Holidays to all.

LAWTON ASSOCIATES
4797 Telegraph Ave.
(510) 547-5970



MYRTICE LIN WONG

May the light and the love shine on you this season and always.

PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
2077 Mountain Blvd.
(510) 869-4252



GRAZINA BIVINS

May good health, the joys of family & friendships, and a prosperous New Year be yours.

PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
342 Highland Ave., Piedmont
(510) 845-8007



DEBBI DiMAGGIO

Happy Holidays and sincere appreciation to my clients, family and friends.

THE GRUBB COMPANY
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 227



JOSEPHINE O'SHAUGHNESSY

Good health & happiness always to all my friends & clients

THE GRUBB COMPANY
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 208



CONNIE ROGERS

May the magic of holidays, be yours throughout the coming year!

THE GRUBB CO.
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 204



PAUL TEMPLETON

Happy Holidays and New Years' greetings to all 2000 looks good!

TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley
(510) 652-2133 x 131



LESLIE EASTERDAY

Happy Holidays to all!

TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley
(510) 652-2133 x 134



BEBE McRAE

Joy!

TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley
(510) 652-2133 x 145



RON EGHERMAN

Wishing you Peace and Prosperity for 2000!

TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley
(510) 652-2133 x 127



LESLIE AVANT

Cheers!

TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley
(510) 652-2133 x 122



GEORGE N. LEONARDOS

Season's greetings and many thanks to my clients and friends.

PNC MORTGAGE CORP. OF AMERICA
1990 N. California Blvd. #60
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
VM/Pager (510) 644-4324



D. A. HAMMOND, GRI REALTOR

May the joy of the season bring you happiness!

PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
2077 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 869-4219



LOIS HARRIS

Warmest wishes to one & all for a Happy Holiday & a bright New Year.

PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
3320 Grand Ave.
(510) 287-2521



KATHERINE COOPER

Season's greetings to all with best wishes for a joyous holiday!

THE GRUBB CO.
1960 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-0400 x 211



GINI ERCK

Warm wishes for the holidays and for a bright New Year!

TEMPLETON COMPANY
3070 Claremont Ave., Berkeley
(510) 652-2133 x 133

JUDITH GLASS
SHEILA SABINE

Thanks for the gift of your business from the Glass/Sabine Team.

PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
342 Highland Ave., Piedmont
(510) 428-0900



HEIDI TUGGE

Happy holidays and many thanks to my clients and friends for your support in 1999.

WELLS & BENNETT
1451 Leimert Blvd., Oakland
(510) 531-7000



LINDA FOSS

May the magic of the holidays be yours throughout the coming year.

CALIFORNIA SAVINGS
1998 Mountain Blvd., Oakland
(510) 339-8933



TERI CARLISLE

Holiday greetings and 2000 wishes for a happy New Year!

PACIFIC UNION
1900 Mountain Blvd.
(510) 339-6460 x 305



RUTH MARICICH

Wishing you a prosperous 2000.

Happy Holidays.

HILLS NEWSPAPERS
5707 Redwood Road
Oakland, CA 94619
(510) 339-4056



MARIE ALISON

Wishing you and yours warm holiday greetings.

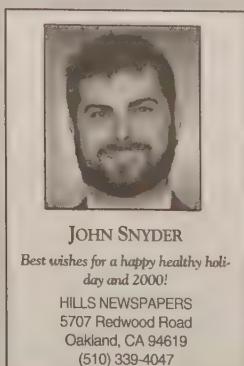
HILLS NEWSPAPERS
5707 Redwood Road
Oakland, CA 94619
(510) 339-4046



M. J. HONOR

Seasons greetings to one and all!

HILLS NEWSPAPERS
5707 Redwood Road
Oakland, CA 94619
(510) 339-4058



JOHN SNYDER

Best wishes for a happy healthy holiday and 2000!

HILLS NEWSPAPERS
5707 Redwood Road
Oakland, CA 94619
(510) 339-4047



CHILDREN MAKE THE MOST of Oakland's park system. At top, students set off on a nature hike. Above, students 'sugar for moths' with a jar of 'yuck.'

Wilson

FROM PAGE B1

Mosswood Cottage

The most valuable cultural assets in Mosswood Park is Mosswood Cottage. Built in 1864 and designed by architect R.S.H. Williams, this is one of the finest Victorian "Carpenter Gothic" Revival cottages in the western United States. It is also the second oldest documented house still standing in Oakland. With multiple high-peaked gables lined with a wide array of scalloped and snaking barge boards, its steeple-like finials, and its oriel Bay window above the Gothic-arched front door, this home creates a strongly Romantic image typical of mid-Victorian architecture.

The De Fremery House

The De Fremery House, at 1651 Adeline St. between 16th and 18th streets in west Oakland, is about the same age as Mosswood Cottage. It was built between 1863 and 1864 by James De Fremery, a Dutch immigrant who came to California in 1849 and later founded the first legal bank in the state. De Fremery gave the home and its grounds to the city in 1907; in 1910 it became Oakland's first municipal playground. Today, it is opened to the public as a recreation center and playground.

The De Fremery House is a rare hybrid of two Victorian styles, Carpenter Gothic Revival and Italianate. The high-peaked central gables lined with thin barge boards are Gothic Revival, while the Tuscan-columned porch running across three sides of the house and the round-arched windows in the gable, as well as the round-arched front door, are Italianate.

Lake Merritt

Oakland residents and visitors deserve Lake Merritt as the city's brightest jewel. Anyone who has walked or driven along the shores of the lake around sunset and watched the setting sun shimmering off its waters understands why Oaklanders are so fond of the unique public treasure, this gem set into the center of the busy cityscape.

Lake Merritt as we know it was created in 1860, when Dr. Samuel Merritt and other civic leaders paid for a dam to be built across the narrow estuary between east and west Oakland. During the 1870s, builders gave rise to elegant mansions in a variety of Victorian styles along the lake's western shores, with each home surrounded by painstakingly landscaped gardens.

Today, only the Cameron-Stanford House remains to remind us of that once proud procession of grand residences. In 1906, under the leadership of Mayor Frank E. Mott, New York landscape architect Charles Mulford Robinson proposed that a park be created around the perimeters of Lake Merritt. Many of the current landscape features lining the lake were part of Robinson's plan.

During the years between the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and the 1920s, most of the brick and stucco neoclassical apartment buildings along the streets immediately west of the lake were built. It was then that the lakeshore area lost its original Victorian character and took on its present-day Mediterranean architectural flavor.

In July 1987, the old "Necklace of Lights" was re-activated. This was a circle of elegant Art Nouveau lamps connected by string of light bulbs which had ringed Lake Merritt from the early 1920s until World War II. It was restored with the help of a years-long private fund raising drive.

Other amenities that grace the

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Historic architecture

To learn more about the historic architecture of the East Bay, enroll in Mark Wilson's class at Piedmont Adult School on Tuesdays from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Classes begin January 11. Call 510-594-2655 to reserve your space.

shores of Lake Merritt include two boathouses which opened in 1914; the Tuscan-columned pergola at the north end of the lake; the lacy, white-washed wooden James P. Edoff Memorial Bandstand, built near the north end of the lake in 1918; and Children's Fairyland Playpark, opened in 1950 along the northwest shore of the lake.

Cameron-Stanford House

The greatest historical asset standing along the shores of Lake Merritt is the lovely Cameron-Stanford House, built in 1876 at the southwest corner of the lake. This is a beautifully restored, superbly maintained example of a bracketed Italianate two-story house. The intricate machine-cut, neoclassical details across the wide angled bays and on the front porch are especially appealing features. The design of this house is attributed to Dr. Samuel Merritt.

William W. Cameron, the home's first owner, was a prominent real estate developer. Josiah Stanford, who owned the house from 1882 until 1903, was the elder brother of Leland Stanford Jr., who founded Stanford University.

Oakland bought the house in 1907 for use as the first Oakland Public Museum. It sat empty for many years after the museum moved to its present site in 1968. A volunteer committee of East Bay citizens saved and restored the house in the mid 1970s. Now it is a museum of Victorian Life in Oakland, and many of its rooms have period furnishings.

Dunsmuir House

Dunsmuir House in the Oakland hills at 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, off the 106th Street exit of Highway 580, is the "grand lady" of East Bay historic homes. It was designed by architect J. Eugene Freeman in 1899 in a pure Anti-bellum version of the Colonial Revival style. The massive whitewashed portico extending towards the curved front driveway give this mansion the appearance of "Tara" from Gone With the Wind — before the Civil War.

The spacious, exquisitely-kept grounds around the Dunsmuir House were designed by San Francisco's famed landscape architect James McLaren, who designed Golden Gate Park. The house itself was used as a setting for more than one Hollywood film, including the thriller Burnt Offerings. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and was made part of the city's park system the previous year.

Dunsmuir House is open to the public as a convention center, history museum and gardens from noon to 4 p.m. during mid-April until the end of September. Special events there include the annual "Christmas at Dunsmuir House," a display of historic Victorian- and Edwardian-era holiday decorations.

Mark A. Wilson is a Realtor and architectural historian who works at Prudential California Realty's Albany office. He can be reached at 510-273-9383. Visit him at www.topbroker.com/wilson.

WEEKLY HOME SALES

Compiled by TitleTech

ALAMEDA

2994 Baywalk Rd - \$405,000
713 Baywood Rd - \$345,000
362 Centre Ct #98D - \$281,000
206 Chinaberry Ln - \$356,000
2101 Encinal Av - \$265,000
3004 Encinal Av - \$150,000
1809 Fremont Dr - \$492,000
624 Glenwood Isle Island
\$405,000

1721 Grand St - \$200,000
1005 Holly St - \$340,000
1165 Island Dr - \$265,000
1173 Island Dr - \$234,000
2161 Lincoln Av - \$242,000
1717 Minturn St - \$345,000
2127 San Antonio Av - \$388,000
1714 Santa Clara Av - \$322,500
15 Stone Harbor - \$625,000
1125 Straub Wy - \$300,000
1333 Webster St #A112 - \$120,000
126 Weymouth Ct - \$367,500

BERKELEY

920 Adams St - \$269,000
1221 Brighton Av #3 - \$165,000
906 Fillmore St - \$275,000
1084 Peralta Av - \$298,000
603 Santa Fe Av - \$415,000

2165 Ashby Av - \$297,000
2216 Bonar St - \$165,000
1651 California St - \$284,000
2418 Cedar St - \$515,000
1170 Cragmont Av - \$425,000
1112 Dartmouth St - \$275,000
1520 Dwight Wy - \$3,109,000
1079 Euclid Av - \$525,000
1226 Monterey Av - \$501,500
208 Panoramic Wy - \$355,000
1216 Parker St - \$271,000
76 Parnassus Rd - \$575,000
971 Regal Rd - \$403,000
2121 Russell St - \$496,000
2232 Russell St - \$228,000
2449 Russell St - \$483,000
1818 Woolsey St - \$235,000

EL CERRITO

5715 Alta Punta Av - \$315,000
1515 Elm St - \$175,000

EL SOBRANTE

3119 North Rancho Pl - \$390,000

EMERYVILLE

1018 44th St - \$117,000
8 Admiral Dr #241 - \$134,500
2 Admiral Dr #278 - \$195,000
6363 Christie Av #2224 - \$220,000

OAKLAND

2011 11th Av - \$270,000
1416 14th St - \$121,500
2027 26th Av - \$125,000
2933 35th Av - \$181,500
443 37th St - \$326,500
3774 38th Av - \$214,000
919 44th St - \$153,000
1932 51st Av - \$162,000
2626 56th Av - \$165,000
630 56th St - \$275,000
1007 61st St - \$200,000
2575 67th Av - \$167,000
917 70th Av - \$100,000
1464 71st Av - \$350,000
1806 74th Av - \$113,000
816 7th Av - \$218,000
1479 82nd Av - \$122,500
1317 83rd Av - \$315,000
1914 84th Av - \$124,000
2056 85th Av - \$80,000
11008 Acalanes Dr - \$140,000
600 Aileen St - \$149,000
937 Arlington Av - \$200,000
7615 Arthur St - \$110,000
7823 Arthur St - \$165,000
5417 Belgrave Pl - \$495,000
389 Belmont St #106 - \$150,000
3142 Brookdale Av - \$204,000

PIER 39

1781 Brooklyn Av - \$295,000
3542 Calafia Av - \$285,000
220 Caldecott Ln #100 - \$195,500
220 Caldecott Ln #111 - \$265,000
280 Caldecott Ln #236 - \$185,000
5212 Camden St - \$230,000
2680 Camino Lenada - \$310,000
3777 Canon Av - \$235,000
4110 Carrington St - \$172,000
6517 Chelton Dr - \$400,000
524 Chetwood St - \$170,000
485 Clifton St - \$299,500
5421 Crittenton St - \$140,000
9712 D St - \$140,000
4617 Dolores Av - \$463,000
2620 East 23rd St - \$140,000
1410 Everett Av - \$462,000
2653 Fisher Av - \$180,000
7973 Fontaine St - \$124,000
3414 Guido St - \$335,000
8050 Hansom Dr - \$383,000
3572 Harper St - \$119,000
2431 Harrington Av - \$130,000
4992 Hedge Ln - \$430,000
431 International Bl - \$189,500
573 Kemmore Av - \$369,000
5001 Lawton Av - \$329,000
6042 Leona St - \$285,000
1428 Madison St #111 - \$80,000
3752 Magee Av - \$162,500
4170 Manila Av - \$315,000
4800 Manila Av - \$326,000
3907 Midvale Av - \$153,000
6805 Moore Dr - \$655,000
6914 Morken St - \$92,000
5733 Morse Dr - \$245,000
19 Moss Av - \$353,000
1520 Munson Wy - \$105,000
7173 Norfolk Rd - \$1,140,000
1948 Oak Crest Dr - \$407,000
16 Observation Pl - \$836,000
6432 Pinehaven Rd - \$500,000
2730 Pleasant St - \$145,000
6239 Racine St - \$190,000
2918 Rawson St - \$190,000
4634 Redwood Rd - \$389,000
3009 Richmond Bl - \$315,000
3044 Richmond Bl - \$400,000
4608 Rockingham Ct - \$1,800,000
1926 Rosecrest Dr - \$532,000

SAN FRANCISCO

7815 Ruby St - \$150,000
6125 Skyline Bl - \$404,000
2840 Steinmetz Wy - \$395,000
4399 Terrabella Pl - \$331,000
5320 Thomas Av - \$520,000
6315 Thornhill Dr - \$410,000
89 Thousand Oaks St - \$264,500
11 Town Square - \$173,500
836 Trestle Glen Rd - \$552,000
261 Tunis Rd - \$105,000
646 Tyler St - \$132,000
4150 Webster St - \$425,000
1725 Wellington St - \$385,000
3971 Whittle Av - \$330,000

PIEDMONT

115 Bonita Av - \$1,585,000
300 Pacific Av - \$650,000

RICHMOND

553 21st St - \$138,000
675 26th St - \$165,000
1134 28th St - \$169,000
529 31st St - \$160,500
664 33rd St - \$142,500
645 43rd St - \$185,000
1830 6th St - \$75,000
926 Aliviev Av - \$210,000
2811 Andrade Av - \$122,000
3510 Barrett Av - \$165,000
4367 Bell Av - \$177,000
3525 Bissell Av - \$80,500
5283 Buckboard Wy - \$335,000
3113 Center Av - \$147,000
800 Chesley Av - \$135,000
413 Commodore Dr - \$230,000
5326 Country View Dr - \$383,000
1540 Cypress Av - \$270,000
1680 Cypress Av - \$165,000
2620 Dundee Rd - \$210,000
53 Harbor View Dr - \$440,000
2314 Homestead Cr - \$260,000
549 Key Bl - \$273,000
3125 Lake View Ct - \$242,000
4076 Lambert Rd - \$176,000
617 Lincoln Av - \$118,500
3857 Linden Ln - \$165,500
2839 Loyola Av - \$180,000
2833 McBryde Av - \$200,000
2310 Meadowlark St - \$154,000

SAN LORENZO

897 Hacienda Av - \$200,000

11 Paseo Grande #1 - \$1

15936 Via Cordoba - \$125,000

1743 Via Hermosa - \$1

15768 Via Lunado - \$1

756 Via Manzana - \$1

15882 Via Paro - \$207,000

16053 Via Pinale - \$175,000

16018 Via Primero - \$1

1839 Via Sarita - \$328,500

15747 Via Seo - \$325,300

17581 Wickman Pl - \$1

This list was compiled for publication in Hills Newspapers by TitleTech of Oakland which weekly records from the recorder's office. Neither guarantees accuracy or completeness of the information. Some prices are estimated based on applicable county transfer tax. All questions regarding information and any requests for listing and services provided by TitleTech should be directed to Bud Gordon at 568-7233.

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Real Estate & Home

700A Real Estate Loans

CREDIT Problems? Home loans as low as 6.5% fixed rate. Call Lynn anytime. Fast friendly serv. GRANITE MTG.

701 Investment Property

OAKLAND 5 units, 4+2 bdrm, 1st flrm, gd. area, off st. Separate meters for all units. \$280K Call Tom Davis, Bkr. 510-841-0335.

704 Manufactured/ Mobile Homes

ANTIOCH BANK REPO. 5+ Park. No. Qualifying w/10% down, \$41,000.00. Call Tom Davis, Bkr. 510-841-0335.

705 Condominiums & Townhouses

ALAMO 1BD/1BA upper lev., 1st flrm, 1/2 bath, 1 car gar. \$21,000. (925) 831-9620.

708B Benicia

5 NEW HOMES.

includes 3 models, with many upgrades. From \$242,990-\$312,990. Call for info. 925-747-2290.

CLASSIFIED Quick & Easy!

704 Manufactured/ Mobile Homes

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No. Qualifying w/10% down, \$41,000.00. Call Tom Davis, Bkr. 510-841-0335.

DANVILLE

By owner, lg. 3 bdrm, 2 1/2 ba, 1919 st. view.

\$39K 408-619-1377 msg.

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4A Found

LILKE, 15-apt., brown min. tita. bkt, Treat & Limeridge Open Space (925) 609-9532

CATS 2 fern gray tabbies, 3 mo. old. DGS 2 fern. Beagle mixes 4 mos. 925/718-6534

CATS (3), 2 blk, 1 wht w/bk. & grey. 10 mos. Earthquake Marting (925) 228-8724

DOG. Found. 12/19. Brown tunda pit mix. fixed male (925) 549-2367

DOG Ig. Blk. long-hair, fem. Found in North Livermore. Descr. (925) 373-9044

DOG Male, brown, w/collar. No tag. Found. Name: Lar. School (925) 652-1081

DOGS 2 Dalmatians found 1/18/99. Lazy & Wizzard/San Pablo. Anita (510) 237-2368

DRYER. Whirlpool heavy duty. Works great. (925) 681-1001

PITBULL, orange/blk, wht. tusk. female. pup. Found in Emeryville. (925) 223-4512

4B Lost

A LOST OR FOUND PET? Petfinders 1-800-666-5678 www.petfinders.org

AMERICAN Eskimo min. fern. w/blk. wt. 12/10. \$100. Reward (925) 240-6911

BEAGLE, 12/12. Adult male, owners to "Einstein", blk w/blk. Concord Bl/Ayers Rd. area. 925/827-9236

BIRD, 12/15, green parrot, yellow head, talks. (925) 335-0960

CAT adult female, gray cat w/white. Found. Name: Heather. P/C Reward (925) 938-4592

CAT, blk. male, green eye. 11/22/99. Pleasant Vn./Pleasant Ridge. New. (925) 491-9410

Entourage

8000

1754 A Avenue, Vn.

Lafayette

MOVING!

SATURDAY 8-2 P.M.

3946 N. Peardale Dr. Furniture, sport equipment, yard tools, household misc.

Martinez

YARD SALE! Saturday 8-3 P.M.

606 Parkview Dr. (off Howe Rd.) take Pine St exit. Sale items: lawn furniture, tool box, kitchen, car tools, auto accessories. Sony Rack system. Item \$75. Great Xmas gift!

For more information, contact the Contractor's State License Board at: (800) 521-2752 or (925) 265-3900

Moraga

BIG SALE

SATURDAY 12/18 9-4

25 MAYFIELD PLACE

Beanie Baby Bears, Wine cooler, art, ceramics, mugs,

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Holiday Wishes

From Your Local Realtors and Affiliates

In appreciation of our association during the past year, we extend
our best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season to everyone.



Barbara Reynolds

My best wishes for a happy and heartfelt holiday season.
PRUDENTIAL CALIFORNIA REALTY
2855 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley
(510) 845-0200



Ana & Pascal Forest
(& Baby Adam)
Team Forest wishes you all Health, Joy and Adventure!
Happy New Year ~ Bonne Année!

Prudential California Realty
2855 Telegraph Ave., Suite 100
Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 845-0200



Aliky Vasdekis
Peace, joy, and good health to all my friends and clients and sincere thanks for your support in 1999.
Prudential California Realty
1417 Solano Ave., Albany, CA 94706
(510) 644-5255



Barbara Conheim
May the new century bring you health and joy!
Berkeley Hills Realty
1714 Solano Ave., Berkeley
(510) 524-9888



Lillie Braudy
Greetings! Thank You To All My Clients & Their Wonderful Realtors
Prudential California Realty
lillie@sirius.com
(510) 524-7365



Nancy B. Hoover

Happy Chanukah & Merry Christmas
It's Been A Very Good Year!
Red Oak Realty
2983 College Ave., Berkeley
(510) 280-2167



Thanks for a wonderful year. Here's to a wonderful 2000. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy holiday season.

Red Oak Realty
2983 College Ave., Berkeley
(510) 280-2170



Barbara Kaplan
Looking forward to 2000!
Best Wishes to you all.
MARVIN GARDENS REAL ESTATE
510-559-2910
Barbara@marvengardens.com



Steve Walden
One of the joys of the Holiday Season is to say "Thank You!"
FISHMAN FINANCIAL
1503 Solano Ave.
Berkeley
(510) 528-2255



Gwen Hoople
Season's Greetings and Many Thanks for Your Friends and Business in 1999
RED OAK REALTY
2983 College Ave., Berkeley
(510) 280-2164



Diane Verducci

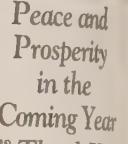
I contributed to 23 charitable organizations on your behalf from your referrals this year.
Thank you everyone.
COLDWELL BANKER
(510) 981-3014



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From Red Oak Realty.
We're ready to help you with
your real estate needs
in the new Millennium.
Come by and see us.
1891 Solano Avenue, Berkeley
2983 College Avenue, Berkeley



Arlene Baxter
Wishing you much love and laughter in your homes during the holidays & throughout 2000.
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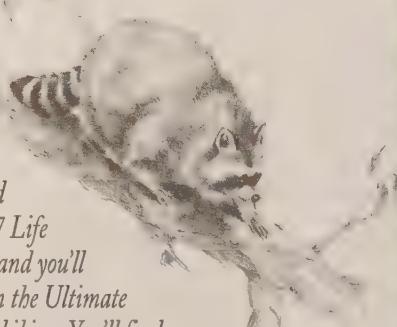


Peace and
Prosperity
in the
Coming Year
& Thank You!
MaryAnn Baxter
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SPORTS

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JV

December 24, 1999

Section C

Soccer Mavericks a formidable power in youth soccer [C2]**Arts** Local organizations, writers awarded NEA grants [C3]

Open season for St. Mary's boys hoops

OT loss to Monte Vista has Panthers wondering if they can still take the league

By Scott Strain

If the game against Monte Vista on Monday night at home is any indication, the St. Mary's High School boys basketball season is not going quite the way coach Jose Caraballo envisioned it.

"We're a lot better than that, but the kids have to learn," Caraballo said after losing to a rather ordinary Mustang team 68-59 in overtime. "Our strengths are size, speed and quickness, but we are not using them."

"There are a lot of things we are not doing. We're not finishing going into the basket. I can't tell you how many shots we missed inside even though we were bigger. Even though they are fouled, they have to be strong enough to go through that and make the basket. That's what happened in the last game (against Red Bluff) we couldn't do it and it showed up again tonight."

It's too bad — the Alameda Contra Costa Athletic League is wide-open this season and is begging for a standout team. There are a lot of good teams, but no great

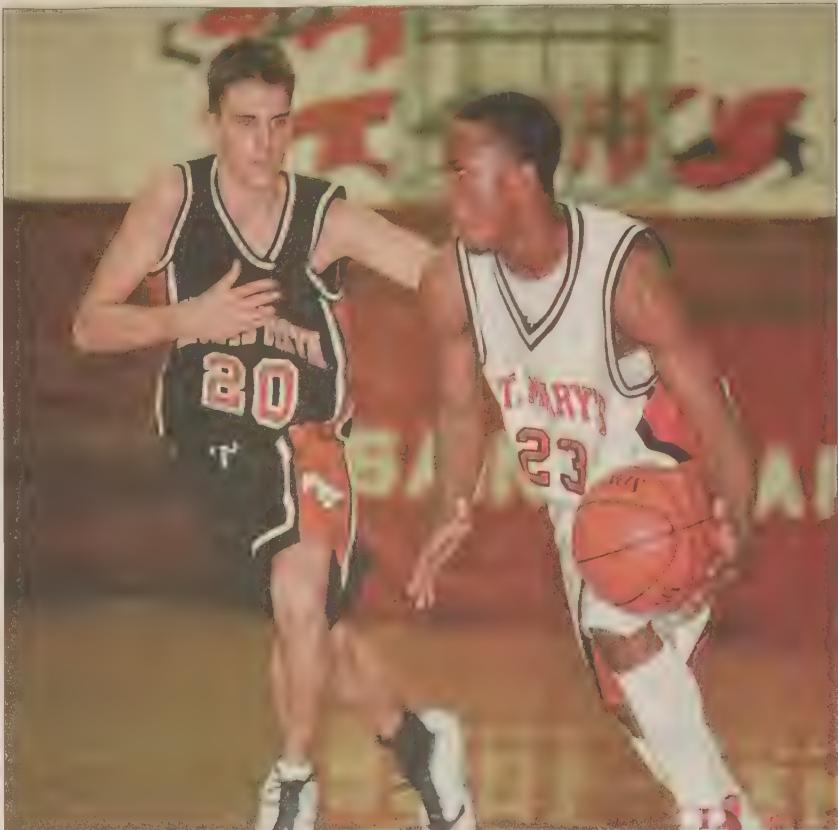
The Alameda Contra Costa Athletic League is wide-open this season and is begging for a standout team.

ones. Think NFL, high-school style. The Panthers, if they can get their act together, could be one of a half dozen teams that could be a leader.

St. Mary's exhibited a lot of flash and dash against Monte Vista, but when it came to putting the ball in the hoop, the Panthers misfired badly. The team missed "six or seven" clear shots inside, according to Caraballo, and could have put the Mustangs away for good. But they didn't and the visitors from Danville hung on.

Monte Vista was only 5-4 going into the game, but played smart basketball.

See ST. MARY'S, Page C2



ST. MARY'S JAMES HARRIS, right, cuts past Monte Vista's John Senior during their game Monday night in Berkeley. The Panthers dropped the contest, 68-59, in overtime. JOANNA J-HANDA

BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Jackets win consolation finals in Santa Barbara

Staff report

Aisha Hollans showed why she is one of the premier players in the nation as she scored 23 points to give Berkeley High the consolation championship at the Tournament of Champions girls basketball tournament in Santa Barbara.

The Yellowjackets played a tight contest against Nashua High (N.H.) 54-51 on Monday.

The game was tied going into the fourth quarter and the Jackets needed everything they had to win this one.

Sabrina Keys added 17 points, including some sharp shooting from the line (7 of 8). Nycole Brown scored 10 points and, Erica McGlaston added four points.

Despite the scoring, Berkeley had 11 different players on the court at different times. The Jackets had a 5-point lead at the half, but Nashua was able to tie the score heading into the fourth quarter.

Nashua (6-2) had two players in double figures as Liz Dancavse scored 13 points and Michaela Leary added 10 points.

The 3-1 finish was a vast improvement over last year when the team lost all four

games without its star player Coriel Davis. Berkeley (6-1) rebounded from its tournament-opening loss to Copperas Cove (Texas) by beating Shelbyville (Tenn.) 76-64 in the second round of the tournament.

The Yellowjackets jumped out to an 18-1 lead after the first quarter and they led 35-26 at halftime. The two teams played evenly through the second half as Berkeley maintained a double-digit lead through the third and fourth quarters.

Robin Roberson paced all scorers with 18 points, including five of six shooting from the line. Hollans added 16 points before fouling out, while Keys had 13 points.

The Jackets' 28 of 38 shots from the line. Natasha Bailey (eight points) went six for six from the line, and Brown (seven points) and Erica McGlaston (six points) each hit all four of their free throws attempts.

Abi Ramsey (16 points) and Tynisha Alexander (15 points) led Shelbyville (4-1).

Albany girls

Albany finished the Pinole Holiday Classic with a 53-31 loss to league rival De Anza in the seventh-place game.

The Cougars (2-6) were paced by Tara

Greene's 12 points, while Nina Samuel added nine points, including a 3-pointer.

Alexis Martin hit a 3-pointer for her points, Stephanie Wistler added three points, while Trina Nagakura and Kelly Chin each scored a bucket. The Cougars only went to the line four times in the game.

De Anza (4-5) went out to a 17-6 lead after the first quarter, but Albany came back to win the second quarter and trim the lead by two points.

The Dons used a 12-5 run in the third quarter to take the game back and they finished with a 16-10 run for the final.

Tamesha Grant led all scorers with 17 points and Erica Johnson added 10 points for De Anza. Vashonda Richardson also scored eight for the Dons.

St. Mary's girls

St. Mary's beat Mt. Shasta 49-46 in the consolation championship of the Red Bluff Holiday Classic at Red Bluff High School.

Joslyn Shelton was on fire for the Lady Panthers, hitting eight field goals including a pair of 3-pointers on the way to 22 points.

See BASKETBALL, Page C2

SOCCER ROUNDUP

Eames heads into break with 34 goals

El Cerrito girls alone in first place

By Mike McGreehan

Katie Eames has been a goal-scoring machine for El Cerrito High School's girls soccer team so far this year with an amazing 34 goals.

Last Friday, Eames played true to form by scoring four goals in the Gauchos' 5-0 shutout of St. Joseph-Notre Dame in Alameda Contra Costa Athletic League play.

Melissa Mello and Jenny McKnight each assisted on two of Eames' goals as El Cerrito improved to 4-0 in ACCAL play and 9-2-1 overall.

Despite the fine play of Eames, Mello and McKnight, it was the Faulkner sisters who got the Gauchos going.

Natalie Faulkner scored the game's first goal at seven minutes with help from sister Carrie Faulkner.

That score held up well into the second half as St. Joseph-Notre Dame hung tough.

Eames made it 2-0 at 55 minutes with help from Mello. Eames then put the game away with a scoring barrage that started

15 minutes later.

At 70 minutes, Eames scored a second goal off a Mello feed. Eames made it 4-0 with an assist from McKnight at 75 minutes, then closed the scoring from McKnight two minutes later.

In other ACCAL action last Friday, St. Mary's played Richmond 1-1. St. Mary's (2-5 overall, 0-2-1 ACCAL) opened the scoring when Becca Kawauchi found net with help from Nicole Griffin at 53 minutes.

Isela Cazarez scored the equalizer for Richmond (1-1-2 ACCAL) at 66 minutes. Chrissy Chavez finished with seven saves in goal for the Panthers.

Albany, meanwhile, tasted defeat for the first time in league play by falling 3-0 at home to Alameda (4-1-1, 2-1).

Lila Keene made nine saves for Albany (4-2, 3-1).

Elsewhere, Salesian (5-1, 3-0) breezed to a 9-0 win over Kennedy (0-6, 0-4). Piedmont (3-0 ACCAL) was a 7-0 winner over Encinal (0-4 ACCAL). Holy Names and De Anza did not play.

See SOCCER, Page C2

Albany wrestlers hoping to give their coach another title

Staff report

Kermit Bankson has been around the block a few times in his three decades as head coach of the Albany High School wrestling team.

The veteran coach has seen his team win 10 league titles in that time. The Cougars would like nothing better than to give their coach a Tri-County Athletic League championship in his 30th anniversary year.

It will be a tough goal for the team to meet, but the Cougars believe they have what it takes to do it.

The TCAL poses a challenging set of foes. In the Cougars' draw of six schools from the 13-member league, they will see

Miramonte, (Jan. 6), Mt. Diablo (Jan. 13), Loma Lomas (Jan. 20), Alhambra (Jan. 27), Freedom (Feb. 3) and Athenian (Feb. 10).

So far Albany is off to an excellent start, taking first place as a team in the Irvington Tournament in Fremont on Dec. 4. In team competition, the Cougars beat Kennedy 81-0, Washington 65-6, Arroyo Grande 62-12, Milpitas 63-18 and San Lorenzo 59-17. No one has really come close to knocking off Albany.

Seven members of the Albany squad took first place in their weight categories. Sophomore David Yeaman was the year's winner, taking the 112-pound class victory. Juniors Jovany Duque (125 pounds), Newton Casemiro (152 pounds) and Karl Moore (160 pounds) were also winners. Seniors Chris Schweitzer (130

pounds), Yavir Plan (140 pounds) and Ben Weinstein (171 pounds) had fine showings to take their classes.

Casemiro was the pinmaster of the bunch. He was awarded the trophy for the most number of pins in the fastest time. He was a perfect five for five and pinned all his opponents in a total time of under five minutes.

The following weekend the Cougars competed in the Bay Area Tournament at Castro Valley. Albany placed fifth at the meet against the likes of Amador Valley, Campolindo, De La Salle, Dublin and James Logan High.

Yeaman led the Cougars, placing second in the 112-pound class. Duque, Casemiro and Moore each placed fourth in their weight classes, while Schweitzer

was fifth.

Weinstein and junior Marlow Rodiguez (215 pounds) took sixth place.

Albany won a preseason scrimmage meet against Oakland Tech before leaving for a trip to Los Angeles to test the waters down south at the Colton Tournament.

In L.A. Newton, Casemiro and Moore all placed third in their weight classes, while Schweitzer was fourth and Duque placed fifth.

The team planned a one-day break after the Colton tournament before hitting the mats in preparation for the opening league meet at home against Miramonte High.

The Thursday night match begins at 7 at Albany High.

Casemiro was the pinmaster of the bunch. He was awarded the trophy for the most number of pins in the fastest time. He pinned all five of his opponents in a total time of under five minutes.

Arts

East Bay organizations, writers awarded NEA grants

BILL MANN
Media Notes

Christmas card

Who are the luckiest people at Christmas? I'd argue it's those parents with between 2 and 12 or so (ages approximate). The happiest? The ones with young children. That's because what Christmas means all about is kids, when you right down to it. (An admittedly personal interpretation from a non-religious.) Still, tonight this Presbyterians will attend a Christmas Eve service at a Congregationalist (not sure, but I think it's a branch of Episcopalian) church near my home — my one and only house of worship for the year. And I'm doing it for one reason: to sing Christmas carols. I mean, Christmas carols. Almost as much as I get a kick out of watching the excited faces of children at the time of year.

I remember that the Christmas holiday spirit was much in evidence even when I lived in tropical Hawaii, both as an adult and as a child. The latter back when Arthur Godfrey's Hawaiian singer, Leleki, made "Mele Kalikimaka" a song and a Christmas-card image. If you can remember Arthur Godfrey, you could have a smiley beard of your own. At the time of year, my wife and I remember having little kids in the house, our two now being grown. It's also the time of year when I additionally thank friends in the area and elsewhere who have been so gracious and helpful this year in putting these discussions together.

A Merry Christmas, then, goes to jolly (off-camera anyway) KTVU 2 anchor Dennis Richard, and the happiest of holidays goes down at Jack London Square at KTVU — Roland DeMille, Tom Vacar, producer Mike Thompson, Andy Dayton, Ross McGowan, Randy Madabui, Bob MacKenzie and all the rest of that great bunch of newscasters ... Here's wishing congratulations to KTVU G.M. Kevin O'Brien, as well as execs Carolyn Kenny, Wardell and all the rest. May the holidays be far better than the 49ers locker room Alameda home on Channel 5. A guy Rick Quan, and may new baby bring extra joy to KTVU anchor Dianne Dwyer, and sports-anchor hubby, Tim ... We lift a wassail to another sports guy, Alamedan Steve Kuehne of KCBS, as well as a toast to KMBR's always-jolly Gary Rad-

All tees and greens in the new year to KRON's anchor Pete Williams and may there be many happy holidays in 2000 for KCBS' hard-hitting weatherman Mike Pechett. God rest ye merry to KRON's PR person, Jodie Chase, who Santa's reindeer be heard on the rooftop at the Marin home of KRON weatherman "Jolly" Joel Weller ... Non-sectarian holiday and a Cubs pennant (finally) KRON-TV programmer Tom Spitz, and we wish a lucrative Christmas to Chris-Craft's TV stations to KRON 44 boss John Siegel next year ... Holiday's best to KGO anchor Ron Owens, his wife Jan (formerly of KCBS) and two daughters... and may I emphasize that KTVU commentator Sam Copeland and his wife Mary had a merry Christmas in San Leandro? Speaking of that fair-weather Santa-like San Leandro Times' Fred Zehnder, long-time KTVU news director who is much used in Channel 2's newsroom year ... A wish for many exclusives in the new year goes out to CBS anchor Steve Little, and KTVU 10's Don Bleu keep playing the Christmas hits forever in East Bay home ... May the new year bring many successful auditions to the studios of KQED-FM's double host, Michael Krasny, and a toast of (non-alcoholic) eggnog to KSFQ's jolly trio of Barbara Simpson, Geoff Metcalf, and Rodgers ...

A season's wish for another great A's season to KALB sales guy Chris Edwards, and a holiday hope for a better Niners season next year (but not better than the 49ers) to KGO Radio execs Greg Luckoff and Jack Swanson ... This holiday news just in: CBS exec Ed Cavagnaro deserves a Merry Christmas ... Hollywood's best wishes go out to helpful TV readers Kenn Fong and Dr. Mike Lano, as well as to KPIX's resident good guy, John Catchings ...

See MANN, Page C4

Berkeley Repertory received largest of the lot at \$63,000

By Anita Amirrezvani

The National Endowment for the Arts is operating at its lowest budget in more than 20 years, but in an announcement made today, 14 East Bay arts organizations received a total of \$282,500 in grants, about \$75,000 more than last year. Two East Bay writers also received fellowships of \$20,000 each.

The NEA budget for fiscal year 2000 is \$97.6 million, of which \$79.6 million is slated for grants. In this first

round of granting, arts organizations and writers around the country shared nearly \$20 million, of which California received more than \$2.8 million. The grants were made in three categories: creation and presentation of work, planning and stabilization of organizations, and individual literature fellowships.

Here are the East Bay organizations that received grants.

■ **Berkeley Repertory Theatre:** \$63,000 for a production of Ben Jonson's "The Alchemist."

■ **Berkeley Symphony Orchestra:** \$5,000 to perform the orchestral works of young composers for the first time.

■ **Clarity Educational Productions, Berkeley:** \$50,000 to produce a six-part documentary film on the history of the international anti-

apartheid movement.

■ **East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, Richmond:** \$15,000 to support an African Choreographers' Forum.

■ **Jazz in Flight, Oakland:** \$5,000 for the organization's jazz concert series and annual Eddie Moore Festival.

■ **Kelsey Street Press, Berkeley:** \$5,000 to support two books of prose poems, "The Vertical Interrogation of Strangers" by Bhanu Kapil and "Four" by Renée Gladman.

■ **Kitka, Oakland:** \$42,500 for the New Folksongs Project, which will allow the women's chorus to commission new work from local composers.

■ **La Peña Cultural Center, Berkeley:** \$20,000 to build understanding within and between specific cultural communities. It's a project being planned with Citecentre Dance The-

ater and World Stage Performance Gallery.

■ **Oakland East Bay Symphony:** \$12,000 to support the presentation of new symphonic work.

■ **Oakland Museum of California:** \$24,000 to present a retrospective exhibit of the work of artist Elmer Bischoff.

■ **Pacific Film Archive:** \$20,000 to commission five new music scores to accompany the presentation of silent films.

■ **San Francisco Early Music Society, Berkeley:** \$5,000 to present concerts of early music.

■ **Threepenny Review, Berkeley:** \$11,000 to produce four issues of the literary publication.

■ **UC-Berkeley:** \$5,000 to present

See GRANTS, Page C4

HOT SHEET!

■ Oakland residents Angela Watrous and Carole Honeychurch, co-authors of "After the Breakup: Women Sort Through the Rubble and Rebuild Lives of New Possibilities," will celebrate their new text at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 6, at DIESEL, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave., Oakland.

■ Oakland's Derique McGee, a former member of the Pickle Family Circus, will teach circus skills during a winter camp 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday, Dec. 27, at Children's Fairyland, 699 Bellevue Ave., Oakland. Cost \$175 per child. Call 510-238-6878, ext. 1.

EVENTS



OAKLAND PIANIST Christopher Weldon, the 1997 winner of the Kosciuszko Foundation National Chopin Competition in New York City, will perform at 8 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 3, at Julia Morgan Theater in Berkeley

Oakland Ballet — "Nutcracker," closing Dec. 24. An amazing journey begins when a young girl joins her family and friends at a holiday party and is given a nutcracker by her godfather. Tickets: \$7-\$31. Runs Saturday, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m.; Dec. 17, 7 p.m.; Dec. 21, 2 p.m.; Dec. 22 and Dec. 24, 11 a.m.; Dec. 23, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. At Paramount Theatre, 2025 Broadway, Oakland. Call 510-465-6400 or 510-762-BASS

Badrashinshram — "Hindustani Vocal Concert," Dec. 25, 3 p.m. A unique Christmas celebration with a music recital by vocalists Deepali Ghate Deglurkar and an international vegetarian feast after the performance. Free. At 15602 Maubert Ave., San Leandro. Call 510-278-2444.

Chamber Music Sundaes — San Francisco Symphony musicians, Jan. 2, 3:15 p.m. A program of works by Herzogenberg, Tchaikovsky, and Dvorak. Admission: \$15 general, \$12 seniors and students. At St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave., Berkeley. Call 415-584-5949

Patten College — "The Night Before Christmas," Dec. 24, 8 p.m. A musical drama presented by the Patten College Symphonette with the Christian Cathedral and the Patten Academy players. Free. Christian Cathedral, 2433 Coolidge Ave., Oakland. Call 510-533-8300.

Ashkenaz — International Soul Orchestra, Dec. 24, 9:30 p.m. Admission: \$7; Earl Zero and Raskidus, Dec. 26, 8 p.m. Admission: \$8; DP and the Rhythm Riders, Dec. 28, 9 p.m. Admission: \$7; New Year's Eve Folklore Party, Dec. 31, 8 p.m. Featuing Edessa, Anoush Ellas, Vassil and Maria Bebelev, Joe Finn and Leslie Bonnett, Balkan and Beyond. For all ages. Admission: \$15 general, free children age 12 and under; Aux Cajun, Zydeco Mama, Cajun Classics, Jan. 1, 9:30 p.m. Admission: \$10. Club at 1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. Call 510-525-5099 or www.ashkenaz.com

Blakes — The Steve Gannon Band, Dec. 27. Admission: \$3; Groove Industries, Dec. 30. Admission: \$4. For age 18 and older. Music at 9:30 p.m. At 2367 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. Call 510-848-0886.

Cato's Ale House — Mitch Marcus Quartet, Dec. 26. J. Steinbauer Trio, Dec. 29. Free. Shows start at 6 p.m. unless noted otherwise. 3891 Piedmont Ave., Oakland. Call 510-655-3349.

See EVENTS, Page C4



SAM NEILL and Robin Williams star in "Bicentennial Man," in which Williams does his usual schtick.

It's the Tin Man without much brain

'Bicentennial Man' has Robin Williams and a San Francisco setting, but that doesn't keep it from being pretty meaningless

By Karen Hershenson

REVIEW

■ **WHAT:** "Bicentennial Man"

■ **STARRING:** Robin Williams, Sam Neill, Embeth Davidtz, Oliver Platt

■ **RATING:** PG (language, some sexual content)

■ **RUNNING TIME:** 2 hours, 11 minutes

■ **WHERE:** Century Oakland 8, Jack London Cinema, UA Berkeley 7, UA Emerybay 10

■ **GRADE:** C

convinced the director to move to San Francisco from New York.

The city is prominently featured, in a not-too-distant-future mode. In

typical science fiction, landmarks such as the Palace of Fine Arts or the Golden Gate Bridge would be shown in ruins, but Columbus leaves them standing, digitally enhanced with holographic signs and airborne automobiles. This judicious use of special effects is one of the movie's best points, and there is a terrific assembly-line inspired opening sequence.

Williams is a robot named Andrew, shipped to a wealthy family to handle household chores. But it is soon obvious that this is no average android. When he accidentally breaks a child's beloved glass figurine, he carves a new one out of driftwood, and, because he is Robin Williams, he yearns to tell jokes. "What's silent and smells like worms?" Answer: "Bird farts."

The actor spends most of the movie in a cumbersome faux-metal

suit, composed of 30 wearable parts and weighing about 35 pounds. It looks like a scary animated toy — an oversized, futuristic Teddy Ruxpin. The eyes have that soft-focus E.T. quality, which directors use to imbue otherwise off-putting characters with humanistic warmth.

Williams has such animated body language that he is recognizable even through this armor. There's that signature bow-legged walk, and well-defined rear, which the actor jokingly refers to as his "roboty." The eyes dance expressively, and he cocks his head meaningfully.

A creation such as this takes getting used to (even for the audience), and when Andrew first arrives at his new home, the household's two girls are horrified. Soon, however, he bonds tightly with the young one,

See BICENTENNIAL, Page C4

Some Park City film entries have Bay Area flavor

Three documentaries by locals are set to compete in Utah; two dramas were shot in San Francisco

By Karen Hershenson

Bay Area filmmakers are once again a force at this year's Sundance Film Festival, slated for Jan. 20-30 in

Park City, Utah.

Among the 112 feature films to be shown at Robert Redford's world-famous enclave are five generated locally, ranging from a documentary about one woman's search for her birth family in Korea to a feature about the San Francisco rave scene. The line-up was announced last week.

Two premieres are also of strong local interest — Emilio Estevez's "Rated X," about the saga of Bay Area porn kings the Mitchell brothers, and "The Virgin Suicides," a fea-

ture by Sofia Coppola, daughter of Francis Ford Coppola.

Three of the locally made films are in the documentary competition, with two by filmmakers who have competed at Sundance before. Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman, San Francisco directors of the 1996 competitor "The Celluloid Closet," return with "Paragraph 175," about a Nazi ordinance that allowed for the persecution of homosexuals. Deborah Hoffman's "Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter" played at Sundance in 1995 and went on to be nominated

for an Academy Award. She's back with "Long Night's Journey Into Day," made with Oakland partner Frances Reid, a film that chronicles the work of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The third competing documentary is Berkeley resident Deann Borshay's "First Person Plural." Adopted into an all-white family in Fremont at age 9, the filmmaker decided to search for her birth parents in Korea, which led to the discovery that her identity

See SUNDANCE, Page C4

See EVENTS, Page C4

Calendar

Submissions to the Community Calendar must be received Thursdays one week prior to publication. Listings are on a space-available basis.

Lehrhaus Judaica at the Reutenberg Center, 2736 Bancroft Way, offers more than 100 classes in Hebrew, Bible History, Culinary Arts, Prayer starting in February. Call 845-6420 for a free catalog. Call 845-6370 for a free catalog.

van der Zanden Studio, 1025 Bancroft Way, No. 9, offers sculpture classes. All levels. Call 843-9445 for additional information.

Children
The Buddy Club Children's Shows begins the new Millennium on Sunday, Jan. 9, 11 a.m. to noon, at the Albany Community Center Theater, 1249 Marin Ave. with Hilarious Jay the juggler. Jay drops everything as he tries to balance fake knives, bowling balls, audience members and even rubber chickens, all while riding a 6-foot unicycle. Tickets: \$7, under 2 free. For tickets, birthday party reservations, and show information, call The Buddy Club at 652-7469.

Kids and their adult companions can explore the University of California Botanical Garden with Docent Lois Paul the last Sunday of every month at 1 p.m. You will visit a section of the garden that represents a different continent or foreign country, find out what's special about the plants that grow there, and then draw what you see. Call 643-2755 to reserve your space.

Theater Rats, Julia Morgan's kid's theater camp program, offers swimming, singing, dancing, acting, and field games as some of its exciting activities. The camp is a two-week session for kids 6-14. Call 883-7023 for additional information.

Yoga Watch class takes place every Friday night from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at 2215 Blake Street near Shattuck. Know nothing. The classes are free. Call 845-6370 for additional information.

Community Media (BCM), channel 25, offers affordable classes in video production and editing to Berkeley residents. Free orientations are held to introduce the BCM to the public on Thursdays, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 2239 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. For more information call 848-6370 and ask for Patrick, John or Sage.

YWCA offers free orientations of its swimming, aerobics, and dance classes held Tuesdays at 10 a.m. For additional information call 848-6370.

Kenaz, 1317 San Pablo Ave., offers belly dances classes ranging from Indian to Kalaripayattu Dances of India, West Coast Swing to Lindy Hop and Lindy Swing. The Ashkenaz is a Jewish music and dance community center. Call 925-5054 for additional information.

Stories/Collage and Ceramics classes forming at St. John's Senior Center, 2727 College Ave., Tuesday evenings 9 a.m. to noon. All are welcome. Sponsored by Berkeley High School Teachers are Diana Bohn and Judi Carroll. Call 845-6830 for additional information.

Temporary Women's Issues class forming at the North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst St. Free, offered by the Berkeley Adult Center, taught by Judith Carroll, MFCC every morning 10 a.m. to noon. Open to women 55 or older. Call 644-6107 for additional information.

Community
Berkeley Art Museum, Pacific Film Archive offers a guided tour of Equal Partner: Men and Women Principals in

See CALENDAR, Page C8

Dance and Fitness Classes open to all in flamenco, Afro-Brazilian, belly-dance, salsa, swing, ballroom, tap, etc. dance, yoga, chi gung, tai chi, aikido, pilates-based body conditioning and more at the YWCA, 2600 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. Drop in fees: \$8-10. Information: 848-6370.

Let's Swing and Jitterbug; 7 p.m. beginning classes, 8 p.m. intermediate; four-week dance classes beginning the first Tuesday of the month; Finnish Brotherhood Hall, 1970 Chestnut, Berkeley; Diana Castillo, 549-3591; \$40 for four classes.

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Body Wisdom, Inc. presents "One One Oh-Oh," an evening of fun and celebration on Jan. 1, 7:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way. This is a concert for the first day of the millennium. Suggested donation: \$10, \$7 students and seniors.

The North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst/MLK Jr. Way, presents a blood pressure session with Alice Meyers on Tuesday, Dec. 28, 9:30 a.m. Call Maggie or Suzanne at 644-6107 for additional information.

Charcot Marie Tooth (CMT) support group meets Saturdays bimonthly at West Berkeley Library, 1125 University Ave. from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. CMT is a neuropathic disorder. Call 524-3506 for additional information.

YWCA Health and Community Education, drop in classes in dance, fitness, yoga, martial arts and more; University YWCA, 2600 Bancroft Way, 848-6370; \$8 - \$10.

Community
Berkeley Art Museum, Pacific Film Archive offers a guided tour of Equal Partner: Men and Women Principals in

See CALENDAR, Page C8

Contemporary Architectural Practice presented by graduate students from the UC-Berkeley Department of Architecture, College of Environmental Design on Alternating Thursdays at 12:15 p.m. and on Sundays at 2 p.m. For additional information call 642-0808.

The Lawrence Hall of Science presents a Winter Holiday Family Science and Song Week beginning Sunday, Dec. 26 and continuing through Friday, Dec. 31. Celebrate the last holiday season of the century with festive family entertainment. Enjoy a full week of dazzling magic, fun music, storytelling, and more. Winter Holiday Family Science and Song Week is sponsored by Bayer Corporation's science literacy program, "Making Science Make Sense," and is included with museum admission. Call 642-5132 for detailed scheduling and additional information.

The East Bay Debt Coalition holds an ecumenical walk at Lake Merritt, Dec. 28, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. To mark the Jubilee 2000 "rolling Fast" during the last 100 days of the millennium, attendees will represent each of the 41 heavily-indebted nations. The rolling fast/walking vigil begins at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 2808 Lakeshore Ave. Interfaith service to follow. Parking at the Chancery of the Diocese of Oakland, 2900 Lakeshore Ave. For information, contact Robert Delaglio, 839-9003. To sign up as a faster, contact Athéa Cummins, 642-8513.

Body Wisdom, Inc. presents "One One Oh-Oh," an evening of fun and celebration on Jan. 1, 7:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 2345 Channing Way. This is a concert for the first day of the millennium. Suggested donation: \$10, \$7 students and seniors.

The North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst, presents a Millennium Party with music and son by the Toru Sanai and Band. Refreshments will be served at 1:15 p.m. For additional information call Maggie or Suzanne at 644-6107.

Overeaters Anonymous meet Fridays at 1:30 PM at the Northbrae Community Church in Berkeley, 941 The Alameda between Solano and Marin Avenues, in Room 2—the childcare room—parents may bring their children. This organization is for individuals who eat compulsively? For further information, call Katherine at 525-5231.

Toastmasters, do it now. Stand up and say what you mean. Come practice Tuesday, noon to 1 p.m. at 700 Heinz Ave. Call 883-6708 for additional information.

Civil Rights activists needed. Write the ACLU chapter of Berkeley, Albany, Richmond, and Kensington, P.O. Box 11141, Berkeley, CA, 94701.

See CALENDAR, Page C8

Bridal Guide

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11:00 pm - Midnight Mass

Christmas Day, December 25

10:00 am - Eucharist with carols & sermon



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New Year's Eve, December 31
10:00 pm - Mass & Celebration

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Christmas Eve, December 24

5 p.m. Pageant and Family Service

10:30 p.m. Sing-along Messiah

11 p.m. Festival Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day, December 25

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Carols

Sunday After Christmas, December 26

8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Feast of the Holy Name, Saturday, January 1

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Feast of the Epiphany, Thursday, January 6

6 p.m. Choral Eucharist with potluck supper and program

Christmas Eve at Northbrae Community Church

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Thank you for all your support and Happy Holidays.

SENIOR

time and season for everything

of the most difficult decisions to accept is the fact that parents can no longer live alone at home. It then falls to the adult-child who is faced with the responsibility of finding a more suitable living arrangement. Unfortunately, guilt can manage to enter the picture as well as a lack of understanding of the aging process. Since the family is experiencing this for the first time, they may not have a competent person to give the needed advice. It is so frustrating that the individuals who need placement believe that they can manage 24 hour a day care and refuse to leave their homes. Unfortunately, it often takes a situation to convince them that change is now necessary, such as a fall, a stroke or a hip replacement.

At that point, the adult-child is thinking: Time is spent trying to establish contacts with agencies, exploring facilities and locations; now we have families that are worn down emotionally. The uninformed have so much to learn. Just understanding medical and legal terminology is not a simple task. It is unrealistic to believe that all you need to know can be simplified. I will touch on a few areas that I hope may help.

Parents who are still able to walk without a cane or walker, take their own medications, bathe and dress, are alert as to time, place and person, they would do well in a retirement/independent facility. They will not have concerns about shopping, cooking or house cleaning. Instead, their time would be spent having adult stimulation with their peers coupled with complete security.

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Acute Hospitals. Summit Medical Center, Kaiser Medical Center, John Muir Medical Center provide immediate treatment for

life threatening care or any emergency situation.

My practical advice would be not to wait until you need to admit someone. Instead, explore all of your options, be aware of your financial needs, and appoint a trusted family member to have Power of Attorney, for both health and financial concerns and know the type of medical insurance available.

These are the basics, but it will be a beginning and give peace of mind. After you have done your "home work" you may call me at The Altenheim for further conversations or to make an appointment, and if you wish a tour, Call Penny Graff, Director of Marketing, (510) 530-4013.

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The Auto Section

The Montclarion, The Piedmonter, The Berkeley Voice, The Journal, The Alameda Journal

December 24, 1999

Section D

Trends Are you ready for coast-to-coast seamless audio? [D2]

Business Ford considers moving Jaguar, Volvo HQ to California [D2]

Clubs Proving that birds of a feather turbodrive together [D4]



Drive, She Said

By Denise McCluggage

Acts of dumbness make their mark.

Think risks through; save your life

Driving is what everybody does better than anybody else. Just ask anybody. Yet someone out there is doing dumb stuff.

Someone is following too closely, cutting in too sharply, peering through windshields blanketed with stickers, yakking on a cell phone while oblivious to catastrophe, dawdling along in the so-called fast lane, jumping on the brakes when such action is counterproductive and dazzling the world by constant use of high-beam headlights. (The list goes on so feel free to jump in with your pet anguish inflicted on you by other drivers.)

If you are not committing any of these acts of dumbness (and I certainly am

See SAFETY, Page D4

Acura pulls the wraps off MD-X concept

By Arnold Wechter

NORTH AMERICAN AUTO WRITERS SYNDICATE

Wanna know what Acura's been cooking up for 2000? Wonder no longer. The automaker just pulled the wraps off of

its 2001 model 3.2CL performance coupe and its MD-X concept SUV. Acura is set to debut the CL coupe at the Los Angeles Auto Show, while the MD-X concept vehicle will be unveiled at the nation's top show, the North American Interna-

tional Auto Show in Detroit.

"The Detroit and Los Angeles auto shows are excellent venues to clearly demonstrate our exciting future direction for Acura," said Dick Collier, executive vice president, Acura Division. "The

CL and MD-X signal our intentions to be segment leaders in the luxury performance coupe and sport utility markets."

The 3.2CL features a high-output en-

See SECRETS, Page D4

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Satellite system tunes in changes for AM/FM car radio

Radio relieves the boredom of long distance driving. Frequently, when you have tuned in a station you enjoy, the signal begins to break up and then is lost altogether. That's because you drive out of a station's range or hit a dead spot. Then you're compelled to listen to broadcasts that you may not enjoy or drive in silence.

This should end when satellite radio broadcasts are inaugurated in 2001. Ford and GM plan to begin installing the new receivers in cars that can receive about 100 channels of music, news, talk and other entertainment. The broadcasts will be beamed down from satellites so you can listen to them coast to coast wherever you drive. Hawaii and Alaska residents, however, will not receive the broadcasts.

One sticking point is that Ford and GM will use non-compatible technologies, so the receivers installed by the companies will not be interchangeable. America's number one and two carmakers plan to charge about \$10 per month for the new service. Both systems promise much the same results.

— No loss of signal within continental U.S.

— Most channels will be commercial free.

— Sound quality superior to conventional radio.

— Both systems will broadcast to receivers than can still receive AM/FM stations.

Ford claims it will be first to offer satellite radio when it begins installing the AM/FM satellite receivers in cars during the first quarter of 2001. Although it hasn't announced which cars satellite radio will be introduced in, Ford says it will eventually be available in all seven brands: Ford, Lincoln, Mercury, Jaguar, Aston Martin, Mazda and Volvo.

If Ford is actually first, GM won't be far behind. The world's biggest carmaker says it will begin offering

Down the Road

By Herb Shuldin

Sirius has a NASA-type control center and one of the world's largest digital automation systems. Its digital satellite radio system is scheduled to offer 50 channels of news, sports and entertainment programming and 50 channels of commercial-free music.

satellite radio receivers in the first half of 2001, but has not specified which cars will get it first.

Sirius Satellite Radio, Inc. is the vendor for the Ford system. XM Satellite Radio, Inc. will supply GM with the technology. Sirius has a NASA-type control center and one of the world's largest digital automation systems. Its digital satellite radio system is scheduled to offer 50 channels of news, sports and entertainment programming and 50 channels of commercial-free music.

Sirius will get content from National Public Radio, BBC, Bloomberg and other information providers. These broadcasts will be relayed through three satellites that are now under construction. The first satellite is scheduled for launch in

January, 2000.

GM's provider, XM, says it will broadcast from two satellites made by Hughes Space & Communications. A network of terrestrial repeaters will augment the satellite signal coverage. Its programming includes music by artists with strong sales who do not get air play on conventional AM and FM stations. Rock, country, jazz, reggae and pop classical music will be aired by XM. The company plans to give each channel a specific name and personality.

Panasonic, Alpine, Delphi Delco, Motorola, Pioneer and Sharp are among the manufacturers who will offer radios that receive satellite broadcasts and conventional AM/FM stations. Home receivers and portable radios with the capability of playing the satellite broadcasts will also be available to subscribers.

Many questions remain about whether satellite radio can be successful. One of the main issues is that most drivers, who constitute about 70 percent of radio listeners, prefer local stations for immediate area traffic and weather conditions. Can national stations duplicate this type of local coverage?

One point that won't be known until the services are actually available is how many listeners will be willing to spend \$120 a year for the special radio reception when local radio is free. Another non-satellite based system is under development by USA Digital Radio, Inc. of Columbia, Md. It plans to insert digital signals under the present AM/FM spectrum not currently used.

The main advantage of USADR's system is that it will not replace local stations, but merely improve the sound quality of their broadcasts. USADR's system will also require new hardware.

But it has so far only managed to interest one company, Kenwood, in considering manufacturing hardware for its system.



XM SATELLITE RADIO will beam up to 100 broadcast channels from two satellites to a receiver "recapture" the signal coast to coast.

Ford turns its back on curves, goes straight with new Focus

By Arnold and Marion Wechter
NORTH AMERICAN AUTO WRITERS SYNDICATE

It's round out and straight in? Ford may be changing the shape of future automobiles if its "New Edge" styling takes hold.

Unlike the current industry styling which features soft, round curves, the New Edge styling features sharp lines and creases. We first saw it on the Mercury Cougar sports coupe and now the highly successful Ford Focus compact series has arrived on the scene.

With the Focus, like the Cougar, it takes a while to become used to the new styling — this was true when we tested the Cougar and is true with this new small car from Ford. It took nearly the entire seven days of our test to start appreciating the new design. But once it takes hold the "New Edge" styling becomes appealing.

Focus was designed in Europe and it already is the best-selling car in England. It

has received high praise from European auto writers as a definite step forward.

While designed and built in Europe, North American models are manufactured at Ford's plants in Wayne, Mich., and Hermosillo, Mexico.

One nice feature of the "New Edge" look is that makes the Focus stand out in the crowd. You'll never lose it in a crowded parking lot.

The bold new styling also has added benefits. It allows the designers to provide more than adequate interior room. Ford claims the car's design started on the inside aimed at a new generation of customers, taller than ever before. The Focus' cabin provides more cabin space, interior comfort and roominess.

Focus' high roofline, raised seating positions, tall, wide door and long wheelbase together to provide more overall passenger room than any major competitor.

Seating positions are more upright, which results in more than 43 inches of front leg room and more than 37 inches in rear leg

room — more than three inches additional front leg room and almost one-half inch more rear leg room than the competition.

Ford claims the Focus will seat five comfortably. We disagree, four comfortably but a third passenger in the rear seat is going to be squeezed.

Ford is aiming the Focus at the Chevrolet Cavalier, Saturn SL, Saturn Wagon, Dodge/Plymouth Neon, Toyota Corolla and Honda Civic.

We expected Marion to stick her nose into the air with the arrival of the Focus on the driveway. She's not known for her love of compact cars. Wrong again, she fell in love with it. "The styling is excellent and the interior marvelous," she said.

Our test car was the ZTS four-door sedan — the top-of-the-line model. The Focus is offered as a sporty 3-door coupe, sedan and station wagon. The three models are offered in four series (ZXi, LX, SE and ZTS) matched to varying lifestyles.

What ZTS stands for we don't know. Maybe "Tasty, Zesty, Spicy." Your guess is as good as ours.

All of the above means little if the Focus isn't a good performer.

Focus is powered by two 2.0-liter engines and a choice of manual or an all-new electronically controlled automatic transmission. The test car was equipped with the light-weight, high-efficiency 2.0-liter 16-valve DOHC Zetec inline 4-cylinder engine that delivers 130 horsepower at 5300 rpm. Peak torque is 135 ft/lbs at 4500 rpm.

The provides the Focus with more than adequate power and matched to the manual transmission performance is both perky

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SPECIFICATIONS:

2000 Ford Focus

- Horsepower: 130 bhp @ 5300 rpm
- Torque: 135 ft/lbs @ 4500 rpm
- Transmission: 5-speed manual, optional 4-speed automatic
- Steering: power-assisted rack-and-pinion
- Brakes: front 258 mm ventilated discs, rear 203 mm with optional ABS
- Wheelbase: 103.0 in.
- Overall length: 174.9 in.
- Width: 66.9 in.
- Height: 56.3 in.
- Track, front/rear: 58.8/58.5 in.
- Curb weight: 2,551 lbs.
- Fuel capacity: 13.2 gal.
- EPA rating: 26 mpg city, 33 mpg highway

Ford considers moving Jaguar, Volvo headquarters from N.J. to California

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEWARK, N.J. — Ford Motor Co. may move the North American headquarters of its Jaguar and Volvo brands from New Jersey to Irvine where it already bases its Lincoln and Mercury brands.

Any move, which would affect nearly 700 workers, would also involve Ford's Aston Martin brand, which has two people working out of the Jaguar offices, company officials said Monday.

The relocation investigation is "in the early, very early stages" and no timetable has been set for a decision, said Tom Mattia, a Lincoln spokesman in Irvine, where Lincoln and Mercury went three years ago from Ford's base in Dearborn, Mich.

Some 150 people work in Irvine and a new headquarters building is to be erected, he said.

Sweden-based Volvo has 500 people in Rockleigh, N.J., while England-based Jaguar has 180 people in Mahwah, N.J. Aston Martin is headquartered in England.

The possible shift of its North American bases is related to the formation of Ford's premier automotive group last spring. The unit is in charge of Ford's luxury brands: Lincoln, Jaguar, Volvo and Aston Martin.

Ford, the No. 2 automaker worldwide, is examining how those brands can "share resources," Mattia said.

Soren Johansson, a spokesman for Volvo Cars of North America Inc., said the move has been under review since early summer after being raised by Wolfgang Reitzle, the former product development chief at BMW AG who joined Ford to run its premier automotive group in March.

In the event of a move, the staff has been told that those who cannot move "will be taken care of very well," Johansson said.

The comments came in response to an article posted Monday on the Web site www.thecarconnection.com. Citing unnamed sources, the article said the New Jersey operations would move to California, "barring a last-minute change."

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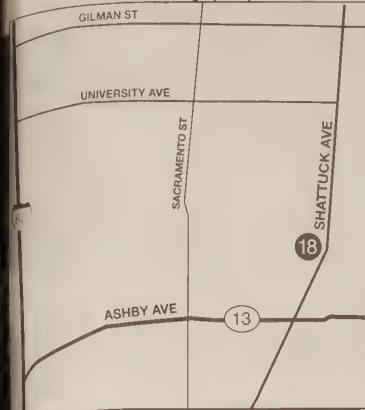
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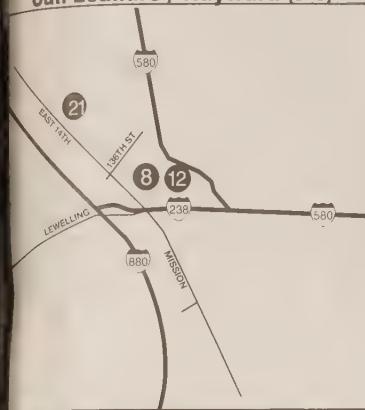
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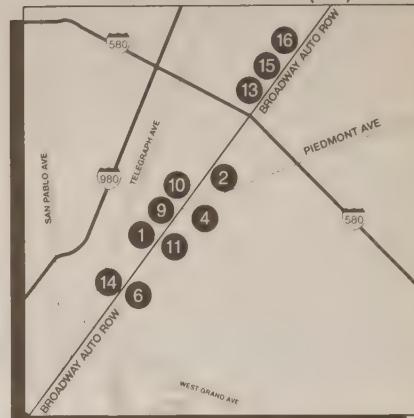
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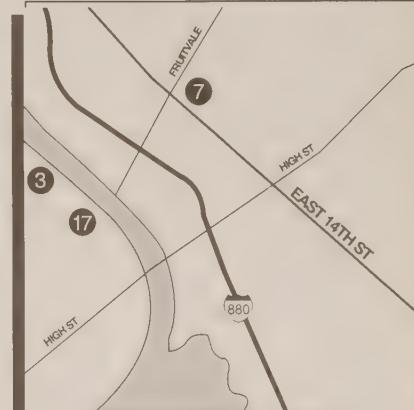
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Safety

FROM PAGE D1

not, then it must be your brother-in-law, the bag boy at the your supermarket, or your boss's niece.

If you know a subtle way to lead them to enlightenment, then you will be doing the wheeled world a major favor. First, I'll pose three questions. If you get them right you are ready to go forth and be a glowing example to others. If you fail, you can take up bagging groceries or being your boss's niece. Assume the same scene

throughout.

The temperature is below freezing, but there's little evidence of a recent snow fall. You are approaching a stop sign on a slight downhill grade. There are no cars ahead of you. The cross street, which has no stop sign, has light traffic. What should you be thinking as you approach the stop sign?

1. I should call Jim Whitsiz before noon because of the time zone difference.

2. Snow at stop signs is often compacted to ice, so it lasts longer than anywhere else and heat from the catalytic converters on the cars stopping there keeps the surface

moist, keeping things slippery, so I should do my braking early. Since I have anti-lock brakes, I should press hard and steadily on the brake pedal instead of pumping like the shop teacher (doubling as a driving instructor) told us in high school.

3. Maybe I should wait and let Jim Whitsiz call me on his nickel.

Did you choose 2? You are right.

The next is the same scene, but there is a car stopped at the stop sign. A pickup darts out of a parking lot in front of you, so it is between you and the stop sign. What do you do?

1. Honk your horn to notify the pickup driver he's done something

risky.

2. Brake immediately on bare pavement, creating a space cushion between you and the pickup before you reach the slippery stretch near the stop sign. You realize that if you cannot stop in time you will have ample room to steer to one side or the other of the pickup. Because you have ABS, you know that a controlled turn is possible while still braking, which is not the case with conventional brakes.

3. You decide it is unlikely you'll be able to stop in time, so you pick up your cell phone and punch the button for the body shop (you tend to call them frequently) and tell them

to be ready for you again.

Number two is right again. OK so far?

Now another. This time the pickup bops out behind you instead of in front, but one look says there's no way it can stop at the sign without an exterior assist. Two cars are approaching the intersection in the far lane of the cross street. There's nothing in the near lane. If you stop at the sign that pickup will collect you. What do you do?

1. You stop anyway while punching up your lawyer on the cell phone to set a suit underway against the pickup driver and start planning what car you'll buy next when this

one is totaled.

2. You accelerate across street without stopping to fit between the two cars.

3. You don't stop at an empty lane of the cross street, keep accelerating to get parts fall out when the car lets the two cars in.

The answer is three. Can't you? So now go both and be exemplary. Don't pickup spun out and he missed him. Only happy here.

Secrets

FROM PAGE D1

gine, sporty styling and host of luxury appointments. See your Acura dealer in March for a closer look.

Acura's MD-X represents the division's vision of a next generation SUV, emphasizing on- and off-road performance combined with a host of technological and design innovations.

Lexus sells millionth car

After 10 years of selling cars and trucks in the United States, Lexus has sold its millionth unit, a Millennium Silver RX300. To commemorate this milestone, the manufacturer

has donated one of the RX300s to the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles to support the museum's programs and exhibits.

The car will sit in the museum's lobby for six months, then will move to the auction block at Christie's International Motor Cars annual auction with the proceeds to benefit the museum to help fund educational programs and future exhibits.

The museum, located in the heart of Los Angeles, is one of the world's largest and most innovative automotive museums. The \$40 million museum, operated by the Natural History Museum Foundation of Los Angeles County, opened to the public in 1994.

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E-mail: mustanggt@hotmail.com
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Ford

FROM PAGE D2

will do better. It rates it at 26 mpg City and 33 mpg on the road.

The base engine is a single overhead cam split-port induction (SPi) engine that provides 110 horsepower at 5000 rpm and 125 ft/lbs of torque at 3750 rpm. This engine has been upgraded significantly to improve noise/vibration/harshness (NVH) and reduce weight.

We found driving the Focus provided to be better because the car never stumbled or hemmed and hawed on grades and its handling provided a feeling of security.

Engineers provided the Focus

with a stiff body structure and at the same time it is one of the lightest vehicles in its class.

Ford says an independent multi-link rear suspension is a major reason for the cars excellent handling and ride.

The low-friction rack-and-pinion steering with power assistance earned high praise from both of us. Road feedback proved superb.

Safety has not been overlooked.

Driver and passenger air bags are

standard and head-and-chest side air bags are an option.

The interior of our ZRS sedan was roomy as we reported earlier. It was also well done. The seats, which are height adjustable, are comfortable but could use additional support. The rear bench seat, which can

be folded to provide additional storage room, is good.

We linked the instrument panel

One of the Focus' most impressive

features is the huge

trunk. Marion

gasped when she

loaded her golf gear

along with cart and

saw there was still

room for luggage.

which is guarded against is located directly in front of the car and consists of speed and temperature gauges, a wide range warning signal, cruise control are located steering wheel.

The most important is located on two stalks of adjustable steering column. The column is adjustable down and front and back.

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SALES ASSISTANT Contra Costa Newspapers is seeking a Sales Assistant to provide support to the Advertising Sales Department. The successful candidate will be a customer oriented professional, possess good organizational skills and be a team player. Ability to juggle multiple tasks. Duties include: preparing proofing and scheduling ads and providing clerical support to our local Advertising Department.

We offer an excellent benefit package including 401K. Please submit resume to: Contra Costa Newspapers, Attn: Human Resources, Job #SA, PO Box 5088, Walnut Creek, CA 94598, attn: HR Fax 451-421-0620

CLERK TYPIST

Part-time, 10-12 hour employee to perform a wide variety of moderately difficult clerical tasks under general supervision. Four Friday. Typing skills. Duties include general clerical work. \$807-1035. Exp. 10 hrs. Workday 8:00-12:00. Oak St. Walnut Creek, CA 94524-2168, ext. 2200. Deadline: 1/6/00 EOE

Collection Representative

WINTERLAND, a legendary merchandiser of screen printed garments to the entertainment and apparel industries, is seeking a detail-oriented, self-motivated collection responsibilities.

You will initiate investigation and provide solutions for problems or errors with customers, as well as contact external customers to negotiate payment on delinquent accounts. Communication, negotiation, and follow-through skills are required. You must have a general understanding of A/R accounts Receivable concepts, work well under minimum supervision, and be superior telephone skills.

If you like a high energy work environment, send resume and salary history to: Ad #OR, 1951 Alameda, Suite 100, San Leandro, CA 94578, fax to personnel@winterland.com, or Fax: 510/347-4018. EOE

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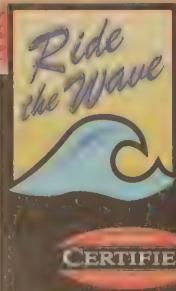
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92 Honda Accord DX

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94 Nissan Sentra GXE

AC, AM/FM Cass, Pwr Steering #816854
#618774/1541P

\$7,995

97 Mercury Tracer

Auto, Air Cond., AM/FM Stereo, Dual Air Bags
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\$8,595

96 Ford Contour

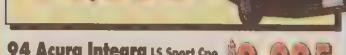
AC, Auto, PW, PDL, Cruise #240163
#618774/1541P

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99 Honda Civic EX

AC, PW, PDL, Tilt Wheel, Cruise, Cass, Moonroof #065400/10311A

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99 Acura Integra LS Sport Cpe. **\$9,995**

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98 Pontiac Sunfire

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97 Nissan Sentra GLE

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98 Toyota Corolla LE **\$12,595**

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96 Dodge Stealth

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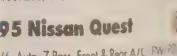
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V-6, Auto, 7 Pass., Dual AC, PW, PDL, Tilt, CC, Leather & More #28922/1552P

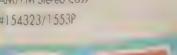
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December 24, 1999

Fresh-baked cookies can take the chill off a chilly day

By Susan Selasky
KNOTHT RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

It's never too early to start up your holiday cookie baking assembly line. Here are some tips and techniques from the Detroit Free Press Test Kitchen to help your enterprise run smoothly.

Preparing

Food processors are great when recipes call for sifting dry ingredients such as flour and baking powder.

Simply use the pulse function a few times.

The processor also works well when a recipe calls for cutting in butter or other fats such as shortening.

Blenders or food processors also

great for grinding or chopping

peeling

Fresh-baked cookies are best, but most cookies and cookie dough freeze well, including dough butter and sugar cookies.

Cough will keep about two days

in the refrigerator; it will freeze for 2 to 3 months, wrapped well in freezer-quality plastic wrap and placed in a sealable plastic bag.

Press out as much air as possible.

Thaw dough in the refrigerator overnight and follow the recipe for assembling and baking.

If you are making cut-out cookies, cut the dough into desired shapes and place them on a baking sheet.

Flash-freeze on baking sheets for 2-3 hours.

When frozen, remove and transfer the cookies to heavy-duty plastic sealable bags or airtight containers and freeze.

When ready to bake, remove them from the freezer, bake, cool and decorate as desired.

Brownies and bar cookies also freeze well.

After baking, freeze them uncut and in the baking pan if desired.

When partially thawed, cut them into bars.

Or cut them after baking, wrap



HOLIDAY COOKIE-MAKING does not have to be a time-consuming project. Cookies such as peanut meringues, nut diamonds, orange mocha brownies and apricot dreams can be made in quantity in cookie sheets.

well individually and freeze.

Freeze cookies without frostings and glazes, which will weep when thawed.

Shipping

Most small- and medium-size cookies, brownies and bar cookies ship well if packaged with care.

It's best to wrap each variety separately in plastic wrap.

Cookies should be packed tightly in tins or other airtight containers to avoid movement during shipping.

After packing, place the container in another shipping box and secure with crumpled newspaper,

bubble wrap or foam shipping pieces to cushion.

Wrap softer brownies, blondies and bar cookies individually in plastic wrap.

According to "Joy of Cooking Christmas Cookies" by Irma S. Rombauer, Marion Rombauer Becker and Ethan Becker (Scrib-

ner, \$16.95), delicate cookie varieties should be carefully packed in tins with crumpled wax paper around them to keep them from jostling each other.

Extremely thin, brittle cookies and tender, crumbly ones do not

See COOKIES, Page 2



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Cookies

FROM PAGE 1

travel well, nor do cookies with sticky glazes or moist fillings such as jams or buttercream.

Cashew Puffies

2 cups all-purpose flour (see note)

3/4 teaspoon baking powder

3/4 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 1/3 cups unsalted roasted cashews, coarsely chopped

3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

1 large egg

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/2 cup sour cream

Place two oven racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Butter or grease baking sheets or use nonstick sheets.

In a small bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Whisk the mixture to incorporate the dry ingredients. Add the cashews and set aside. In a food processor fitted with the metal blade, process the sugar until it is very fine. With the motor running, add the butter pieces and process until smooth and creamy. Add the egg and vanilla, processing until incorporated. Add the sour cream and process until incorporated, scraping the sides of the work bowl. Add the flour mixture and pulse until it is mixed in and a dough forms.

If using an electric mixer, follow the directions for mixing the dry ingredients and set aside. Soften the butter and cream it with the sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg and vanilla, scraping the sides of the bowl, then beat in the sour cream. Add the flour mixture until a dough forms.

Drop the dough in heaping teaspoons 1 inches apart on the prepared baking sheets. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes or until golden brown. For even baking rotate the cookie sheets from top to bottom and front to back halfway through baking. Remove from the oven and cool the cookies a few minutes on the sheets. When firm, transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Makes about 6 dozen 1-inch cookies.

Cook's note: When measuring the flour for this recipe, dip the measuring cup into the flour and sweep off excess using a knife. If using salted cashews, place them in a colander or strainer and rinse them under hot water, then crisp them in a 350-degree oven. Cool the cashews completely, then coarsely chop.

Storing: Keep cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for 1 month or freeze for several months.

From "Rose's Christmas Cookies" by Rose Levy Beranbaum (William Morrow and Co., \$19.95) —Tested by Susan Selasky for the Free Press Test Kitchen

52 calories (50 percent from fat), 3 grams fat (1 gram sat. fat), 6 grams carbohydrate, 1 gram protein, 27 mg sodium, 9 mg cholesterol, 7 mg calcium, 0 grams fiber.

Snowballs

1/2 cup pecan halves, lightly toasted

1 cup confectioners' sugar

Pinch of salt

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter

1/2 teaspoon vanilla

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour (see note)

To coat:

1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar

Place two oven racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place the pecans on a baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes

or until lightly browned. Cool completely.

In a food processor fitted with the metal blade, process the sugar with the toasted pecans and salt until the pecans are powder fine. Cut the butter into a few pieces and add it with the motor running, processing until smooth and creamy. Scrape the sides of the bowl, then add the vanilla. Add the flour and pulse until a dough forms.

If using an electric mixer, soften the butter and cream it with the sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the vanilla extract and scrape the sides of the bowl. Grate the nuts until powder fine and whisk them with the flour and salt. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixer on low speed until a dough forms.

Chill the dough at least one hour and no longer than three hours.

Roll the dough into 1-inch balls, lightly flouring your hands if needed. Place the balls 1 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until they barely begin to brown. For even baking, rotate the baking sheets from top to bottom and front to back halfway through baking.

Remove from the oven and cool the cookies on the sheets for 2 to 3 minutes. Place the confectioners' sugar for the coating in a bowl. While cookies are still hot, roll them in the sugar and transfer to wire racks to cool completely. Roll again in the sugar.

Makes about 4 dozen 1-inch cookies.

Cook's note: When measuring the flour for this recipe, dip the measuring cup into the flour and sweep off excess using a knife.

Storing: Place in an airtight container at room temperature for about 1 month.

—From "Rose's Christmas Cookies" by Rose Levy Beranbaum (William Morrow and Co., \$19.95)

—Tested by Susan Selasky for the Free Press Test Kitchen

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

54 calories (51 percent from fat), 3 grams fat (2 grams sat. fat), 6 grams carbohydrate, 0 grams protein, 4 mg sodium, 7 mg cholesterol, 1 mg calcium, 0 gram fiber.

Pecan Lace

3/4 cup unsalted butter
1 cup packed light brown sugar
1/4 cup light corn syrup
1 tablespoon milk
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups rolled oats
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons vanilla
1/2 cup finely chopped pecans, lightly toasted and cooled

Have all the ingredients at room temperature and prepare these cookies on a dry day. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Grease several baking sheets and set aside.

In a medium saucepan, place the butter and bring to a gentle boil, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 4 minutes or until the solids on the bottom of the pan turn light brown. Remove from the heat and stir in the brown sugar, corn syrup, milk and salt. Stir in the oats, flour, vanilla and pecans.

Drop scant teaspoonsfuls of the batter onto prepared baking sheets, spacing at least 3 inches apart to allow room for them to spread. The batter will stiffen as it cools, which is fine.

Bake the cookies in the upper third of the oven for 6 to 8 minutes or until cookies are golden brown all over and slightly dark at the edges. Watch carefully; these cookies bake fast and burn easily. Remove from the oven, place the baking sheet on a wire rack and cool 1 minute. Gently transfer the cookies to wire racks until completely cooled. If the cookies become too cool and brittle to be removed easily from the baking sheets, return

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Cookies

From PAGE 2

till browned around the edges. Remove and cool for 2 minutes, then transfer cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.

To make the icing: Stir together the coffee crystals and 1 tablespoon of the whipping cream or milk until the coffee dissolves. Stir in the confectioners' sugar and enough additional whipping cream or milk to make an icing of piping consistency.

When cookies are cool, pipe icing in a zigzag pattern over cookies. Sprinkle with additional coffee powder if desired.

Makes about 2 dozen cookies.

From "Cookies For Christmas" Better Homes and Gardens (Meredith Books, \$24.95)

—Tested by Susan Selasky for the Free Press Test Kitchen

</div

Tips for making beautifully decorated cookies

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Cookie perfection Cookie decorator and baker Valerie Grondy shared the following tips for making beautifully decorated cookies from start to finish.

Rolling and cutting dough:

Make sure the dough is chilled; if it is warm, it will be too soft to work with.

Roll out dough on a lightly floured cutting board.

The flour should give just a hazy coating to the dough to keep it from sticking; if it cakes in places, lightly brush off the excess with a pastry brush.

Run the rolling pin gently over the dough, beginning in the center and sweeping outwards.

Turn the dough after every few strokes before rolling again.

Most cookie recipes will direct you to roll the dough to a thickness of 1/4 inch or 1/8 inch.

"To help measure correctly, I suggest buying two long wooden dowels, in 1/4-inch and 1/8-inch diameters, and placing one on each side of the dough," says

"It's a good idea to pipe an outline on the cookie with what is called 'flood' icing"

Valerie Grondy

Grondy. "Then roll the rolling pin over the dowels until the dough has flattened to the same thickness."

Dowels can be purchased at hardware stores or kitchenware shops.

Flour the cookie cutter periodically so the dough won't stick.

Brushing:

Even when cookies are cut into traditional shapes, you can add creative touches to the design.

Here, a candy heart is affixed to the snowman, then brushed with a swath of edible gold glitter.

The brush can also be used to paint feathery strokes of colored frosting over the cookie, or to blend colors together.

Use a new, clean paint brush

from an art supply store.

Drawing:

Put some finer details on your design by using a toothpick or wooden skewer.

Pipe thin lines of colored frosting on a single-color frosted background.

Use the end of the skewer to pull lines of frosting into curlicues, sunbursts, pinpoint dots or cross-hatch mark shapes.

Icing:

A standard pastry bag, with tips of different shapes and widths, is the best way to have control over piped frosting.

Use a spatula to fill the pastry bag, then squeeze the frosting toward the tip. Steady the tip with your finger.

You can also use a sturdy plastic

tic freezer bag; fill with frosting and snip off a tiny end of one corner with scissors for piping.

Frosting the cookie:

Decorations may be piped directly on the cookie or painted over a single-color frosted background.

Either way, you need a good icing mixture.

Royal icing, made by mixing confectioners' sugar with egg whites or meringue powder, is the classic frosting mixture.

Glossy and smooth, it also holds its shape nicely when dry.

"It's a good idea to pipe an outline on the cookie with what is called 'flood' icing," Grondy says. "This defines the perimeters of the frosting, which you can then fill with royal icing and not go over the edge of the cookie."

Flood icing is the thicker version of royal icing; the mixture is then thinned with a little water to make royal icing.

Both of the icings may be tinted with food coloring, as desired.

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Cookies

FROM PAGE 3

until easy to handle.

To make the filling: In a small saucepan, combine the cranberries, wine or cranberry-apple drink and orange juice. Bring just to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer uncovered 5 to 10 minutes or until the cranberries are tender and most of the liquid is absorbed, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat and stir in the sugar.

Cool slightly, then process in a food processor or blender until cranberries are chopped. Cool completely.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

On a well-floured surface, roll out half of the dough at a time to a thickness of 1/4-inch. Using a 3-inch-round cookie cutter, cut out the dough. Place the cookies on an ungreased baking sheet and spoon about teaspoon of the filling onto the center of each round. Fold in half and seal the edges together, pressing with a fork.

Bake for 7 to 8 minutes or until the edges are firm and the bottoms are lightly browned. Remove and transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool.

To make the port glaze: Combine all of the ingredients in a medium bowl, adding enough port wine or cranberry-apple drink to make a glaze of drizzling consistency. Tint with a small amount of red food coloring if desired.

To make the icing: Combine all of the ingredients in a small bowl, adding enough milk to make icing of drizzling consistency.

When the cookies are cool, drizzle with the glaze and the icing in a decorative fashion. Makes about 42 cookies.

—From "Cookies For Christmas," Better Homes and Gardens (Meredith Books, \$24.95)

—Tested by Susan Selasky for the Free Press Test Kitchen

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

104 calories (26percent from fat), 3 grams fat (2 grams sat. fat), 19 grams carbohydrate, 1 gram protein, 44 mg sodium, 12 mg cholesterol, 7 mg calcium, 0 grams fiber.

Cinnamon Blossoms

1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon salt
60 chocolate chips or mega morsels

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. In a large bowl, combine the butter, sugar, egg yolk and vanilla. Beat at medium speed, scraping the bowl often, until the mixture is creamy, about 2 to 3 minutes. Reduce the speed to low: add the flour, cinnamon and salt. Beat until well mixed, about 1 to 2 minutes.

Fit a cookie press with the desired template and fill with dough. Press out cookies 1 inch apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 8 to 11 minutes or until the edges are lightly browned.

Remove from oven and immediately place 1 chocolate chip in the center of each cookie. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Makes about 5 dozen cookies.

—From "Cookies," by Land O'Lakes (Tiger Oaks Publications, \$14.95).

—Tested by Susan Selasky for the Free Press Test Kitchen

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

76 calories (58percent from fat), 5 grams fat (3 grams sat. fat), 8 grams carbohydrate, 1 gram protein, 41 mg sodium, 12 mg cholesterol, 4 mg calcium, 0 grams fiber.

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Spa food the rest of us can make and enjoy

By William Rice
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Once upon a time, the food served at spas was virtually invisible. Nearly colorless and virtually flavorless, it represented an effort to minimize calories, sodium and protein and to curb clients' appetites by removing sensory stimulation. "No pain, no gain" became "no pain, no loss." Call it the "bore healthy" diet. In recent decades, however, at a growing number of spas, food is neither sparsely nor bland. Eating comfortable portions of nutritionally wholesome fare and counteracting calories with exercise is seen as a viable long-term approach to well-being.

At the among spas that flaunt their fare are the Golden Door in Escondido, Calif., and its sister establishment, Rancho La Puerta in Tecate, Mexico.

From the "Rancho La Puerta Cookbook" comes a low-fat dip with seven variations to show its versatility. Chef Bill Wavrin says, "Some of our clients back every year talking about the latest fad diet. Those are short-term fixes. Our food is healthy, balanced and interesting. It represents a healthy way to live."

Patricia Stroot of the Golden Door developed a fruit sandwich, healthy twice-baked potatoes and veggie patties on garlic-rosemary buns for a menu that spouses not eating at the spa feel deprived. The

I've selected, lobster and shrimp salad with lime dressing, is a luxury dish, a perfect choice to celebrate achieving a dietary goal. Some ingredients in the recipe will be found in Asian groceries or specialty markets.

This low-fat spread or dip can be varied endlessly

by adding an ingredient or two. Dip with vegetables or baked tortilla chips. There's no cholesterol. Always use the freshest tofu possible.

Tofu Mayonnaise Spread

1/2 cup silken tofu
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon olive oil
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
Pinch cayenne pepper
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a blender or food processor, combine the tofu, lemon juice, oil, garlic and cayenne and process until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a lidded container and refrigerate until ready to use or for up to six days.

Variations:

Green goddess pepper spread: Add 1/4 cup chopped green onion, 1/4 cup chopped fresh spinach leaves and 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano. Increase pepper to 1 teaspoon.

Aioli: Increase garlic to 2 minced cloves.

Mexican spread: Add 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro and 1/2 teaspoon minced serrano chile.

Sun-dried tomato spread: Add 1/2 cup chopped hydrated tomatoes and 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil.

Herb spread: Add 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil, 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano and 1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley.

Chinese spread: Substitute Asian sesame oil for the

See SPA FOOD, Page 6



CHICAGO TRIBUNE

AUTHOR BILL WAVRIN writes of healthy, well-balanced and interesting meals such as this lobster and shrimp salad with lime-ginger dressing in his book, "Rancho La Puerta Cookbook."

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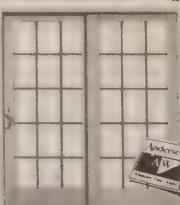
Scot offers FREE IN-HOME estimates so he can assess each customer's individual taste and unique style of their home. This aids him in giving a true estimate for doors and windows that best suits their home needs.

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Resources for reducing calories

By Nancy Ross Ryan
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Sweet reading

— "Let Them Eat Cake: 140 Sinfully Rich Desserts with a Fraction of the Fat," by Susan G. Purdy (Morrow, 1997)

— "1,001 Low-Fat Desserts," by Sue Spitler (Survey Books, 1999)

— "The Art of Cooking for the Diabetic," by Mary Abbott Hess, (Contemporary, 1996)

Prepared fat substitutes

The following prepared commercial fat substitutes are available in baking sections of supermarkets:

— Smucker's brand Baking Healthy Oil & Shortening Replacement for Baking (18.5-ounce squeeze bottle)

— SunSweet Lighter Bake Butter & Oil Replacement (14-ounce jar)

Sugar substitutes

The following prepared commercial sugar substitutes can be used in baking and are readily available in the baking section of supermarkets:

— Stevia, derived from a South American shrub, is available in health food stores and has been approved by the FDA as a food supplement but not as a sweetener. For information on baking with Stevia, contact the manufacturers.

— Sugar Twin Spoonable Sweetener (in 2.85-ounce containers); can be used for baking, comes in white and brown, has 0 calories and is used in equal measures to sugar in recipes.

— Sweet'N Low Granulated Sugar Substitute (in 8-ounce containers), can be used for baking and has 0 calories. Measuring equivalents to granulated sugar are on package.

(Sugar Twin and Sweet'N Low both contain saccharin, which still carries the warning "has been determined to cause cancer in laboratory animals.")

— Featherweight Fructose, a finely granulated powder (in 16-ounce container), can be used in baking. One teaspoon contains 15 calories, the same as granulated sugar, but you use 1/3 less.

— Estevia's brand is granulated stevia powder in a base of maltodextrin (5.2-ounce jar). Manufacturer says can be used in baking.

Common-sense fat substitutes

If a recipe calls for:

— Cream cheese: use light cream cheese or Neufchatel cheese

— Eggs: use egg whites

— Oil and butter: reduce amount; substitute up to 1/3 fruit purées or applesauce

— Baking chocolate: use cocoa

— Nuts, reduce amount

Spa Food

FROM PAGE 5

olive oil and add 1 tablespoon tamari soy sauce and 1 teaspoon chopped fresh ginger.

Caper-mustard spread: Add 2 tablespoons drained capers and 1 teaspoon coarse-grained mustard.

Per 2 tablespoons: 31 calories, 2 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 2 g protein, 1 g carbohydrates, 0 g fiber, 2 mg sodium

— From "The Rancho La Puerta Cookbook" (Broadway Books), by Bill Wavrin

Lobster and Shrimp Salad With Lime-Ginger Dressing

Four servings

3 ounces mung bean Asian noodles or vermicelli

2 tablespoons rice vinegar

1/2 cup thinly sliced scallions, including green tops (2 ounces)

1/2 red bell pepper, juliened (2 ounces)

1 leek, white part only, juliened (3 ounces)

8 slender stalks asparagus, trimmed (3 ounces)

4 to 8 large romaine or butter lettuce leaves

1 cup sliced Bibb or leaf lettuce

12 ounces cooked lobster meat

4 large cooked shrimp (6 ounces before peeling and cooking)

1 papaya, cut into 4 fans or 16 slices, optional garnish

1/3 cup lime-ginger dressing (recipe follows)

1 tablespoon black sesame seeds

1 lime, cut into 4 wedges

4 sprigs fresh cilantro

1. Drop the noodles into a saucepan of boiling water. Immediately remove the pan from the heat and let the noodles stand in the water for 15 minutes, until soft.

2. Drain the noodles and rinse under cool running water. Shake off excess water and place the noodles in a small bowl. Add the rice vinegar and scallions. Toss and set aside.

3. In a steamer basket over boiling water, steam the pepper, leek and asparagus until fork tender, 1 to 2 minutes. Drain, rinse under cold running water and set aside.

4. Line four plates with the lettuce pieces and cover the base of each leaf with sliced lettuce. Top with the noodles and arrange the steamed vegetables around the noodles. Arrange a quarter of the lobster meat on top of each serving of noodles and lay a shrimp next to the lobster. Arrange optional papaya on the side of each plate. Drizzle with dressing and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Garnish each

plate with a lime wedge and cilantro sprig.

Per serving (not including dressing): 322 calories, 8 g total fat, 144 mg cholesterol, 31 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 668 mg sodium.

Lime-Ginger Dressing

Makes about one-third cup
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons mirin (sweet rice wine)

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

1/2 teaspoon fructose

Dash hot chili sauce

1/4 teaspoon Chinese roasted

sesame oil, optional

1/2 teaspoon chopped Japanese

pickled ginger

In a small bowl, combine the lime juice, mirin, rice vinegar, fructose, chili sauce and optional sesame oil. Whisk vigorously until combined.

Stir in pickled ginger and pour over salad as directed.

Per tablespoon: 8 calories, 0 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 g protein, 1 g carbohydrates, 0 g fiber, 1 mg sodium.

— From "The Golden Door Cookbook" (Broadway Books), by Michel Stroot



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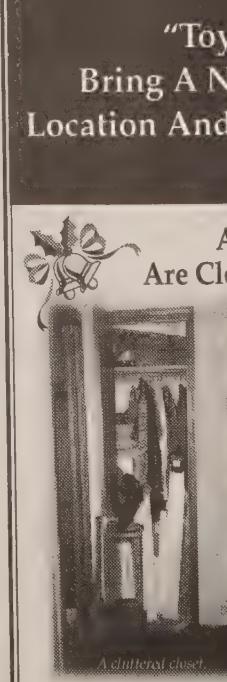
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So-called 'functional foods' are at the center of health debate

By Sylvia Wood

ALBANY (N.Y.) TIMES UNION
N.Y. — Because I want to keep

"The issue that the FDA and health experts are grappling with is what can people say on the label."

Anne Rogen

the end of October agreed to let manufacturers say that foods containing soy protein, in a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol levels.

Some dietitians argue that fruits and vegetables also fit the definition of functional foods because they are so naturally packed with antioxidants believed to fight off certain cancers.

The tomato, for example, contains lycopene, a substance believed to be helpful in preventing prostate cancer.

Yet other functional foods do not come by their health benefits so naturally, fueling controversy over just how these products ought to be labeled and marketed.

"The question is at what point do they stop being foods and become drugs?" said Anne Rogen, a nutrition professor at the Sage Colleges. "The issue that the FDA and health experts are grappling with is what can people say on the label."

That debate played out last year, with the new cholesterol-lowering margarine Benecol, which is made with stanol ester, a natural substance extracted from pine trees.

A study by Mayo Clinic researchers showed that people can reduce their LDL, or bad,

cholesterol by up to 14 percent by eating Benecol.

Benecol's manufacturer, McNeil Consumer Products, wanted to sell the spread as a dietary supplement in groceries alongside regular butter and margarine. Under the laws that regulate supplements, the company then could have made the health claim that the product lowers cholesterol.

But the FDA ruled that Benecol is a food and limited what the company could say on the label.

Yet consumers are likely to see more health claims on food as functional foods continue to multiply on grocery shelves.

The \$15 billion annual industry is growing at about 10 percent a year, outpacing the 2 percent growth of conventional foods.

Dietitians caution that no single food is the answer to good health, no matter what the label says.

And Dr. Clare Hasler, executive director of the Functional Foods for Health Program at the University of Illinois, reminds consumers that the best functional foods can already be found in the produce department.

"If there's only one change that someone could make to their diet, it should be eating six to 11 servings of fruits and vegetables a day," she said.

At their best, functional foods have the potential to increase awareness about the important links between health and food.

"People need to realize they can have control over their health outcomes — and the grocery store is one of the first lines of defense for doing that," Hasler said.

I'll drink to that, with my calcium-fortified O.J.

Chase away winter chills with a tasty vegetable stew

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A hot, cooked stew is just the thing to chase away the chilled-to-the-bone feeling some winter days produce, and meatless versions are just as warming.

Vegetable Stew With Cracked Wheat

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
4 garlic cloves, minced

1 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
8 ounces fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
Two 14 1/2-ounce cans diced tomatoes

8-ounce can tomato sauce
14 1/2-ounce can vegetable stock
2/3 cup cracked wheat
15 1/2-ounce can kidney beans, rinsed and drained

14 1/2-ounce can green beans, drained
1/4 cup fresh parsley
1/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

Heat oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; sauté 5 minutes or until tender. Add zucchini and mushrooms; cook 5 minutes. Add Italian seasoning, crushed red pepper, tomatoes, tomato sauce, vegetable stock and cracked wheat. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes. Uncover and add kidney beans, green beans and parsley; simmer until heated through. Ladle about 1 and 1/3 cups into each bread bowl. Sprinkle with cheese.

Whole Wheat Bread Bowls

1 1/4 cups warm water (105 to 115 F)
1 package active dry yeast

1 1/2 teaspoons sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1 tablespoon oil

2 1/4 to 2 3/4 cups bread flour

1 cup whole wheat flour

1 egg, beaten

1 tablespoon milk

Measure water into a large bowl. Sprinkle in yeast; stir until dissolved. Add sugar, salt, oil and 1 1/4 cups bread flour; beat until smooth. Add whole wheat flour and enough additional bread flour to make a stiff dough. Turn onto a lightly floured board; knead until smooth and elastic, 10 to 12 minutes. Place dough in a bowl that has been lightly coated with nonstick spray, turning to grease top. Cover; let rise in warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 400 F. Grease the outsides of 6 ovenproof bowls that are approximately 4 inches in diameter (such as 10-ounce custard cups).

Punch dough down; divide into 6 pieces. Cover and let rest 10 minutes. Spread each piece into a circle about 6 inches in diameter. Place over outside of bowl, working dough with hands until it fits. Set bowls, dough side up, on a baking sheet coated with nonstick spray. Cover with plastic wrap; let rise in warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes.

Combine egg and milk; gently brush mixture on dough. Bake in oven at 400 F for 15 to 20 minutes until golden brown. Using potholders, carefully remove the bowls. Set bread bowls, open side up, on baking pan; bake for 5 minutes.

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for Bowl Games at 10 a.m.
Lunch at 11:00 a.m.

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